



Supreme Court allows enforcement of new green card rule

By MARK SHERMAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A divided Supreme Court on Monday allowed the Trump administration to put in place new rules that could jeopardize permanent resident status for immigrants who use food stamps, Medicaid and housing vouchers.

Under the new policy, immigration officials can deny green cards to legal immigrants over their use of public benefits.

The justices' order came by a 5-4 vote and reversed a ruling from the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New York that had kept in place a nationwide hold on the policy following lawsuits against it.

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In this June 17, 2019 file photo, The Supreme Court in Washington.

Associated Press

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U.S. attorney announces \$145M settlement in opioid case

BURLINGTON, Vt. (AP) — A San Francisco-based health information technology company will pay \$145 million to resolve criminal and civil charges that it helped set up an electronic health records system that encouraged physicians to prescribe opioids to patients who might not need them, federal prosecutors in Vermont said Monday.

Vermont U.S. Attorney Christina Nolan said the company Practice Fusion, Inc., took kickbacks from a major opioid company in exchange for using its software to influence physicians to prescribe opioid pain medication.

Court documents released at a Burlington news conference said that Practice Fusion solicited a nearly



U.S. Attorney Christina Nolan, center, gestures during a news conference in Burlington, Vt., Monday Jan. 27, 2020.

\$1 million payment from a company identified only as "Pharma Co. X" in exchange for creating an alert in Practice Fusion's electronic health record system. The alert would cause doctors to write more prescriptions for extended release opioids than were medically necessary.

"The companies knew all of this," Nolan said. "The decision to contravene medical guideline was greed-driven and at the behest of Pharma Company X's marketing department and Practice Fusion allowed it because it wanted \$1 million."

Nolan refused to identify

Pharma Co. X or say if any other people involved in the case would face criminal or civil penalties.

Practice Fusion has since been acquired by the electronic health records company Allscripts. In a Monday statement, Allscripts Vice President Brian Farley said the conduct predated his company's acquisition of Practice Fusion.

"Since learning of this matter we have further strengthened Practice Fusion's compliance program," Farley said. "Allscripts recognizes the devastating impact that opioids have had on communities nationwide, and we are using our technology to fight this epidemic."

The settlement included \$26 million in criminal fines

and forfeiture and, in a separate civil settlement, Practice Fusion agreed to pay \$118.6 million to resolve the allegations that it accepted kickbacks from Pharma X and other companies and caused the users of its software to submit false claims for federal incentive payments.

The case represented the largest criminal fine in federal court history in Vermont and it was the first ever criminal action against a vendor of electronic health records, said a statement from the U.S. Attorney's office.

The settlement required Practice Fusion to admit its wrongdoing, invest heavily in compliance and an independent oversight organization. □

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Continued from front

The court's four liberal justices, Stephen Breyer, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Elena Kagan and Sonia Sotomayor, voted to prevent the policy from taking effect.

Federal appeals courts in San Francisco and Richmond, Virginia, had previously overturned trial court rulings against the rules. An injunction in Illinois remains in effect but applies only to that state.

The lawsuits will continue, but immigrants applying for permanent residency must now show they wouldn't be public charges, or burdens to the country.

The new policy significantly expands what factors would be considered to make that determination, and if it is decided that immigrants could potentially become public charges later, that legal residency could be denied. Under the old rules, people who used non-cash benefits, including food stamps and Medicaid, were not considered public charges.

"The public charge rule is the latest attack in the Trump administration's war on immigrants," said Stephen Yale-Loehr, an immigration expert at Cornell University's law school. "It makes it harder for working class people to immigrate to or stay in the United States. This rule is another brick in the invisible wall this administration is building to curb legal immigration."

Roughly 544,000 people

apply for green cards annually. According to the government, 382,000 are in categories that would make them subject to the new review. Immigrants make up a small portion of those getting public benefits, since many are ineligible to receive them because of their immigration status. In a separate opinion, Justice Neil Gorsuch urged his colleagues to confront the "real problem" of so-called nationwide injunctions, orders issued by a single judge that apply everywhere. In this case, even though the administration won rulings in two appellate courts covering 14 states, its policy could not take effect.

"What in this gamesmanship and chaos can we be proud of?" Gorsuch wrote in an opinion joined by Justice Clarence Thomas.

Ken Cuccinelli, the acting deputy secretary of Homeland Security, praised the high court's order. "It is very clear that the U.S. Supreme Court is fed up with these national injunctions by judges who are trying to impose their policy preferences instead of enforcing the law," Cuccinelli said.

Susan Welber, a Legal Aid Society lawyer who is among the attorneys for the plaintiffs, said she believes courts ultimately will invalidate the policy. "What's sad is that the harm that's done while the rule is in effect can't be undone," Welber said. □



In this Feb. 18, 2017, file photo, protestors rallied in support of immigrants and refugees in downtown Dallas.

Associated Press

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In this July 8, 2019, file photo, national security adviser John Bolton speaks at the Christians United for Israel's annual summit, in Washington.

Associated Press

Why it Matters: Bolton revelations complicate Trump defense

WASHINGTON (AP) — Revelations from former national security adviser John Bolton's upcoming book are adding some drama to the ongoing Senate impeachment trial of President Donald Trump. Some reasons they could be important:

CONTRADICTS PRESIDENTIAL DEFENSE

Bolton, who was ousted from his post last year, writes in a book slated for publication in March that Trump told him he wanted to withhold military assistance from Ukraine unless it helped him with investigations into Democratic rival Joe Biden.

That flies in the face of Trump's defense, which the White House defense team is laying out in the Senate. Trump has long insisted that he did not do anything wrong in his phone calls with Ukraine's president and that there was no link between the delay in distributing the aid and possible probes into Biden and his son. Trump has tried to undermine Bolton's credibility — and the impact of his book — by asserting that the former national security adviser is a disgruntled former employee.

INCREASES PRESSURE FOR TRIAL WITNESSES

The Senate, voting along party lines, initially struck down a call for witnesses to be part of the impeachment trial and postponed a decision until later, prompting complaints from Democrats about the fairness of the proceedings.

Reports about Bolton's book have increased the pressure to call witnesses, including senior Trump administration officials like Bolton, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and acting chief of staff Mick Mulvaney.

A Senate vote on whether to call witnesses is expected as soon as Thursday. Four Republican senators would need to join Senate Democrats for the proposal to be approved. Utah Republican Mitt Romney has previously indicated

he would likely be in favor of hearing from witnesses. Maine's Susan Collins said Monday that news about the Bolton book "strengthens the case for witnesses and have prompted a number of conversations among my colleagues."

Even if witnesses are called, it remains unlikely that the GOP-controlled Senate would vote to remove Trump from office. But witness testimony could extend the trial for a week or two, pushing it past next week's State of the Union address and increasing political risk for the president.

BRIGHTER SPOTLIGHT ON TRUMP ASSOCIATES

The book also revives questions about the activities of other top administration officials.

It asserts that Mulvaney, despite denials, was in the room when the president had at least one conversation with his personal lawyer, Rudy Giuliani, who was spearheading the pressure campaign in Ukraine. Mulvaney said Monday he had no recollection of being on hand for the call.

Bolton also said Pompeo shared concern that Giuliani was trying to benefit personally from the Ukraine pressure campaign by helping other clients. Bolton also wrote that Attorney General William Barr was aware earlier than he has acknowledged that he was mentioned in Trump's July call with the Ukrainian leader. Barr has denied that. A move to include testimony from Bolton or the other advisers could prompt Trump to invoke executive privilege to block them, which could result in Democratic protests and a lengthy court battle. □

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Prince Andrew called uncooperative in Jeffrey Epstein probe

NEW YORK (AP) — Britain's Prince Andrew has provided "zero cooperation" to the American investigators who want to interview him as part of their sex trafficking probe into Jeffrey Epstein, a U.S. prosecutor said Monday.

Speaking at a news conference outside Epstein's New York mansion, U.S. Attorney Geoffrey Berman said prosecutors and the FBI had contacted Andrew's lawyers and asked to interview him.

"To date, Prince Andrew has provided zero cooperation," said Berman, the top federal prosecutor in Manhattan.

Buckingham Palace declined to comment.

Andrew announced last year that he was withdrawing from his royal duties amid renewed public attention on a woman's claim that she had several sexual encounters with the prince

at Epstein's behest, starting when she was 17.

Virginia Roberts Giuffre says that after meeting Epstein in Florida in 2000, the millionaire flew her around the world and pressured her into having sex with numerous older men, including Andrew, two senior U.S. politicians, a noted academic, wealthy financiers and the attorney Alan Dershowitz, who is now part of President Donald Trump's impeachment defense team.

All of those men have denied the allegations. Epstein killed himself in his jail cell last summer while he was awaiting trial on sex trafficking charges.

Giuffre has said she had sex with Andrew three times, including once in London in 2001 at the home of Epstein's girlfriend, Ghislaine Maxwell.

It isn't clear what legal exposure Andrew might

have in the case, if any. The age of consent for sex is 16 in England and 17 in New York. However, Giuffre claims that she was paid by Epstein for her sexual encounters with Andrew. That could constitute a violation of U.S. sex trafficking laws if she was under age 18 or was coerced into unwanted sex acts.

Andrew, who is eight in line for the British throne, and Maxwell have both denied any knowledge that Epstein was sexually abusing teenage girls. In a TV interview last fall, Andrew insisted he was out having pizza with his children on the night Giuffre says they were together in London.

U.S. Attorney General William Barr has vowed to aggressively investigate and bring charges against anyone who may have helped Epstein.

Andrew, in the statement he released in November announcing his intention to "step back from public duties," said he regretted his "ill-judged association with



Britain's Prince Andrew accompanies Queen Elizabeth II to attend a church service at St Mary the Virgin, in Hillington, England, Sunday, Jan. 19, 2020.

Associated Press

Jeffrey Epstein."

"Of course, I am willing to help any appropriate law enforcement agency with their investigations, if required," he wrote.

Berman made his remarks about the case during a joint appearance with members of Safe Horizon, a nonprofit victim services agency, to discuss a new New York law that made it easier for people to sue over childhood sexual abuse.

He wouldn't discuss the Epstein investigation in detail but reiterated that the case didn't end with his death.

"Jeffrey Epstein couldn't

have done what he did without the assistance of others, and I can assure you that the investigation is moving forward," Berman said.

Numerous women who said they were sexually abused by Epstein as teenagers have claimed in lawsuits and interviews that he got help recruiting young girls from both Maxwell and several assistants.

Giuffre's lawyers have, for months, been calling on Andrew to agree to be interviewed both by investigators and by the lawyers helping the women with those civil lawsuits. □

Lawyer: Man charged in Hanukkah attack incompetent for trial

MONSEY, N.Y. (AP) — A psychiatrist has found Grafton Thomas incompetent to stand trial on federal hate crime charges stemming from a machete attack at a Hanukkah party that wounded five Hasidic Jews, Thomas's attorney said Monday.

Defense attorney Michael Sussman said in a statement that he has asked a federal judge to hold a competency evaluation for Thomas, who was arrested hours after a stabbing attack on Dec. 28 in Monsey, an Orthodox Jewish community north of New York City.

The federal court has given the U.S. Attorney's Office two weeks to respond to the application for a competency evaluation, Sussman said. The U.S. Attorney's Office declined to comment to the media on

Monday.

Thomas has pleaded not guilty to attempted murder and other charges in Rockland County. He pleaded not guilty to 10 hate-crime charges in federal court on Jan. 13. Thomas is being held without bail in federal custody.

Investigators found anti-Semitic writings in Thomas's journals and articles on Jews and Nazis on his cell phone, according to a complaint filed by the U.S. Attorney's Office.

Sussman and Thomas' mother have said Thomas suffers from mental illness and was not responsible for his actions. Sussman has said Thomas has no history of violent acts or anti-Semitism. One of the victims, 72-year-old Josef Neumann, remains in a coma with a fractured skull and other injuries. □

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Connecticut tribe takes issue with schools' Indian names

By **MICHAEL MELIA**

Associated Press

MONTVILLE, Conn. (AP) —

For decades the Montville High School athletic teams have competed as the "Indians" with the blessing of the Mohegans, the Native American tribe that traces its local history back centuries and today operates one of the world's biggest casinos.

Then last week, the Mohegan Tribe announced that it no longer supports the use of Indian-related team names.

The reversal has unsettled many in the southeastern Connecticut town, which has considered itself immune to controversies stirred by Native American mascots elsewhere because of its close ties to the federally recognized tribe. Not only is the tribe behind Mohegan Sun a major presence in town, and a booster of its athletic programs, but many tribal members have been among the students to wear the black and orange of the Montville Indians.

The tribe and the school system have communicated over the years to ensure the name honors American Indians and is not used in a derogatory way. The mayor, Ronald McDaniel, said the school system will follow up with the tribe but the name has never been a source of friction.

"I don't personally find it offensive," said McDaniel, a Democrat. "We don't use it



In this Friday, Jan. 24, 2020, photo, a sign on the football field pressbox at Montville High School includes the team name "Indians" and logo in Montville, Conn.

in an offensive manner."

Colleen Rix, a Republican town councilor and a 2000 graduate of Montville High, said the Indians name reflects pride in the history shared by the town and tribe.

"It's never been a contentious topic," she said. "I did go to school with several tribal members. It was never this clash between them and us. We were all there and it was, 'Oh, he's a tribal member, that's cool,'" she said.

Supporters draw a distinction with other towns that have mascots wear stereotypical Native American dress or nicknames like "Redskins" or "Redmen"

— the name the school board in Killingly, Connecticut, voted to reinstate this month after briefly adopting the name "Red Hawks." It was amid the fallout of that reversal that the Democratic speaker of the Connecticut House said state lawmakers should consider banning Native American names and symbols at public schools. Several states already have implemented similar bans or restrictions. Across Connecticut, 19 public schools still use Native American-themed names or imagery. In a statement shared first last week with The Day newspaper, Mohegan Chief Lynn Malerba said

the term "Indians" is not offensive in and of itself and in Montville's case the name recognizes the first inhabitants of the area. But she said the tribe believes it is time to end the use of American Indian mascots and team names.

"While the stated intent may be to 'honor' American Indians, there is a great potential for less than respectful behaviors to occur in conjunction with these mascots. Additionally, people should not be considered mascots. It is demeaning to be relegated to a stereotyping of a people. This should not be allowed to continue," Malerba said in the written statement on

Associated Press

behalf of the tribal council, elders council and medicine woman.

Malerba said in an email there have not been recent conversations with the Montville school system on the topic but she anticipated there would be in light of the proposed legislation. Montville Schools Superintendent Laurie Pallin said in a written statement to The Day that she has reached out to the tribe to indicate openness to discussions on the topic, saying the school system and tribe have both "viewed our identity as a sign of our combined history, mutual respect and continued collaboration." She did not respond to requests for comment from The Associated Press.

The tribe's history is recognized in this community of 20,000 people in other ways including streets named after tribal leaders, the Mohegan Elementary School named for the tribe, and the image of a Native American man on patches worn by Montville police officers. The Indians name was adopted when Montville High School was built in 1965. The school has consulted with the tribe over the years on the use of the name. An early logo, featuring a Native American man in profile with a feather in his braided hair, has been phased out in favor of the current logo, an orange "M" in a white circle with two feathers falling off to the side. □

Florida could use drones to fight pythons, invasive species

By **BRENDAN FARRINGTON**

Associated Press

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) —

Florida could turn to the sky to fight Burmese pythons on the ground under a bill a Senate committee unanimously approved Monday to allow two state agencies to use drones in the effort to eradicate invasive plants and animals.

The bill would create an exception to a current law that prohibits law enforcement from using drones to gather information and bans state agencies from

using drones to gather images on private land. It would allow the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and the Florida Forest Service to fly drones to manage and eradicate invasion species on public lands.

Sen. Ben Albritton said he has been told that drones equipped with LiDAR, which stands for Light Detection and Ranging, might be able to identify pythons. "As you know, chasing those nasty critters down there in the Everglades is a

difficult task," Albritton said. "It would help these folks do their job."

He said drones would also help the agencies spot a fern native to Asia that's destroying Florida's natural vegetation.

"There's this plant called lygodium — old world climbing fern — which is wreaking havoc all over Everglades National Park and many other places in the state. I've flown over it in a helicopter and I recognized that it was pretty easy to discern where it is," Albrit-

ton said.

The state wildlife agency's website warns that lygodium spreads rapidly and is a "severe threat" to Everglades tree islands and puts other forests at greater risk for wildfires because it serves as a fire ladder.

"The fern's ability to grow up and over trees and shrubs and to form dense horizontal canopies allows it to cover whole communities of plants reducing native plant diversity," the website says. "Some Everglades tree islands are so completely

blanketed by the fern that it is not possible to see trees and other vegetation beneath the fern canopy."

The bill would also allow the agencies to use drones to fight wildfires.

"During a fire they can use these drones to look for escape routes for employees, if needed, if they get trapped in," Albritton said. "They can measure tinder on the ground. There's a lot of different opportunities for that technology to yield a safer environment for those folks." □

Alabama fire chief: At least 8 died in marina boat dock fire

By JAY REEVES

Associated Press

SCOTTSBORO, Ala. (AP) —

A massive fire that killed at least eight people and destroyed dozens of boats in an Alabama marina early Monday was spread so rapidly by the wind that "we didn't have time to do nothing," said one resident who survived but lost his brother in the cold water.

Tommy Jones, a Jackson County Park Marina resident, said he also watched helplessly as a small boat containing a woman and her children was engulfed in flames.

"There was nothing we could do," he said.

Scottsboro Fire Chief Gene Necklaus said all eight people who were known to be missing have been confirmed dead, and "that number could go up, because we don't know how many were on boats" that sank.

The fire began just after midnight and quickly consumed the dock as people slept. The wooden dock and at least 35 vessels went up in flames and an aluminum roof that covered many of the boats melted and collapsed, cutting off escape routes and raining debris over the area as boaters leaped into the river.

Jones said he was aboard his 35-foot cabin cruiser when someone came banging on the boat after midnight saying, "Man, the marina is on fire." The flames were racing out to the far end of the dock where Jones' boat was tied.

Jones said he and several other men cut some boats free and sent them drifting out into the water. When a man placed his wife and children into a small boat, they cut that boat free too. Finally, Jones said, he jumped into the water and swam for shore, 200 yards away. He believes his brother Yancey Roper, who lived aboard another boat, swam in a different direction. Officials later told him that his brother had

drowned.

As Jones was swimming for shore in water with a temperature in the mid-50s, he said, "I looked back and that other boat with the wife and the children on it was all engulfed in flames." At least seven people were sent to hospitals suffering from exposure to the flames or the frigid water.

"It was scary. The worst thing for me is you could hear people screaming for help, and there was nothing we could do. Nobody could do anything to get to them," said Julie Jackson, who lives with her husband and son in a houseboat on another dock that did not burn.

Necklaus said some of the burning boats sank at the dock and others floated away before going under. He said divers need to locate each one and search them individually before they can be sure there were no other victims.

"We woke up hearing screams and popping noises," Mandy Durham, who was with her boyfriend in a nearby boat, told The Associated Press. "When we woke up, we could see red through the window."

"Within 15 to 20 minutes, the whole dock was in flames," she added. "All these boats have propane tanks and gas tanks, and that's a lot of fire."

The blaze destroyed the B dock, about 50 yards (46 meters) from the A dock where the boat of Durham's boyfriend was moored.

"There were numerous people rescued from the water who had escaped by going into the water," Jackson County Chief Sheriff's Deputy Rocky Harnen told the AP shortly after dawn. "We're trying to get divers down here to search for possible victims."

People were jumping onto a boat at the end of the dock because fire had consumed the middle portion and that was their only escape. But then the flames spread to that boat, leaving water as their only

way out, Durham said.

"Water was the only place they had to go," Durham said. "It's just extremely sad. It's horrible."

Georgia resident Michael Watson said his aunt lived with her husband and five children on one of the boats that burned. He said his aunt was confirmed among the dead and authorities are still looking for the other six family members. Officials have not released the names of any of those killed or missing.

Hours after sunrise, smoke was still rising from the remains of a wooden dock, and pieces of metal that once formed the roof were partially submerged. Police



The charred remains of a boat are shown following a fatal fire at a Tennessee River marina in Scottsboro, Ala., on Monday, Jan. 27, 2020.

Associated Press

and fire boats with flashing lights were positioned near the charred remains, and a yellow floating boom was being deployed around the marina to contain spilled fuel. Most of the boats that were destroyed had people living on them permanently, but some mainly spent weekends on

them, Durham said. The park includes a boat ramp, a dock and a restaurant, and offers boat rentals, according to Jackson County's government website.

"Everybody is just hoping to find the ones they knew on that dock. There were families there. It's devastating," Durham said. □

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Ally of Venezuela's Maduro hires DC lobbyist to build ties

By **JOSHUA GOODMAN**

MIAMI (AP) — An ally of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro has hired a Washington lobbyist whose business has boomed under the Trump administration as part of a \$12.5 million effort to ease sanctions and reset bilateral relations as the U.S.-backed campaign to oust the socialist leader stalls.

The Maduro government's top lawyer, Inspector General Reinaldo Muñoz, hired lobbyist Robert Stryk's Sonoran Policy Group as part of a larger contract he signed with Foley & Lardner, a law firm with offices in Washington.

Both the law firm and Stryk's Sonoran Policy Group registered as agents of Muñoz in separate filings with the Justice Department that were published Monday on the agency's website.

Their work includes "developing a strategy to approach the U.S. Government in support of delisting the Foreign Principal or other parties subject to U.S. economic sanctions due to their connections to the Republic," according to the filing by Foley, which in turn is paying \$2 million to hire Stryk as a consultant.

The outreach comes as U.S. support for opposition leader Juan Guaidó, whom it recognizes as Venezuela's rightful president, has come under fire.

A year into the U.S.-backed campaign to oust Maduro, the socialist leader has successfully beaten back a coup attempt, mass protests and punishing U.S. sanctions that have cut off his government's access to western banks.

Emboldened by Guaidó's difficulties, Maduro is looking to reassert himself and repair his tarnished image in Washington, where he's been roundly rejected as a dictator.

This month, he told the Washington Post that he wants to engage directly with the Trump administration to end a stalemate that has worsened living conditions in the OPEC nation of 30 million people. He also invited the United Na-



Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro gives his annual address to the nation before members of the Constituent Assembly on the grounds of the National Assembly in Caracas, Venezuela, Tuesday, Jan. 14, 2020.

Associated Press

tions and European Union to send observers for legislative elections slated to take place later this year. Stryk, a winemaker and former Republican aide who unsuccessfully ran for mayor of Yountville, California, is one of the top lobbyists in Trump's Washington.

A former unpaid Trump campaign adviser on the West Coast, his firm, Sonoran Policy Group, had no reported lobbying from 2013 to 2016 but has billed more than \$10.5 million to foreign clients since the start of 2017.

Like Venezuela, many of the clients have bruised reputations in Washington or are under U.S. sanctions, such as the governments of Somalia, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Interior, which signed a \$5.4 million contract in May 2017.

He also represents the scandal-plagued Isabel

dos Santos, Africa's richest woman, who is fighting allegations that she accumulated vast wealth through state loans brokered by her father, Angola's former president.

Muñoz's contract with Foley, for a flat fee of \$12.5 million, extends until May 10. Stryk's share of the deal, as a consultant, is \$2 million. Foley said in its filing that it received slightly more than \$3 million in initial payments on behalf of Muñoz from what appear to be two Hong Kong-registered companies. Its work will also include discussions with officials at the U.S. Treasury Department and other U.S. agencies regarding sanctions against the Maduro government.

In December, Stryk's firm also filed paperwork with Congress saying it represents Greylock Capital Management, a Wall Street hedge fund, to assist it with the collection of millions

in unpaid debt owed to American bondholders by Venezuela. A spokesman for Greylock said Stryk was never hired.

This month, Stryk's name showed up in handwritten notes released by the House Intelligence Committee as part of the impeachment inquiry into Trump.

Lev Parnas, a former associate of Rudolph Giuliani in Ukraine who has now turned against Trump's personal attorney, wrote a note to himself on stationery from the Ritz-Carlton hotel in Vienna saying "hire Robert Stryk lobbyist" (sic), the documents show. It's unclear why Parnas scribbled Stryk's name. But one of Giuliani's clients, Venezuelan businessman Alejandro Betancourt, hosted Trump's personal attorney and Parnas at his castle outside Madrid last summer, according to two people familiar with the matter

who spoke on the condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to discuss the meeting. Stryk did not immediately return a phone call requesting comment.

Foley and Venezuelan Communications Minister Jorge Rodríguez both declined to comment.

The U.S. was the first of nearly 60 nations to recognize Guaidó as Venezuela's rightful leader after he used his position as the head of congress to proclaim himself interim president following Maduro's widely rejected 2018 reelection.

The U.S. has long insisted that any negotiations with Maduro would be focused on the terms of his exit and last year rejected talks sponsored by Norway with the opposition as a waste of time that would only strengthen Maduro's hand. But this month Secretary of State Mike Pompeo seemed less hostile to the idea of talks, saying that a negotiated settlement was the best way forward.

Muñoz is one of only a handful of top Maduro aides who so far hasn't been sanctioned by the Trump administration for human rights abuses and corruption.

Guaidó left Venezuela a little over a week ago for only the second time since being elected the head of congress to embark on a support-building tour of Europe and Canada. It started with a meeting with Pompeo in Bogota, the Colombian capital. He missed Trump by a day at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, fueling speculation that the U.S. president wasn't interested in a meeting with the 36-year-old lawmaker.

"If Trump does not meet with him in Washington, it will be a clear indication that the U.S. government has lost faith in the idea that maximum pressure will lead to a transition," said David Smilde of the Washington Office on Latin America think tank. "Even if they do meet, it seems clear that the Trump administration is open to alternatives" □

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Irish leader says EU to have stronger hand in UK trade talks

By JILL LAWLESS
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Ireland's prime minister warned Britain on Monday that Brexit is far from finished -- and the European Union will have the stronger hand in upcoming negotiations on future relations between the two sides.

Leo Varadkar said "we're only at halftime on Brexit," as the bloc's chief Brexit negotiator visited Dublin in a show of solidarity, five days before the U.K. is due to leave the EU.

Britain's exit on Friday, which will be the first time a nation has left the bloc, will be followed by an 11-month transition period in which Britain will continue to follow EU rules while the two sides work out new deals on trade, security and other areas.

"The European Union is a union of 27 member states. The U.K. is only one country," Varadkar told the BBC

before meeting EU Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier. "And we have a population and a market of 450 million people. The U.K., it's about 60 (million). So if these were two teams up against each other playing football, who do you think has the stronger team?"

Speaking after the meeting, Varadkar added that the negotiations didn't need to be a contest, and could end in a "mutually beneficial" deal.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson is adamant that he won't agree to extend the Brexit transition beyond the end of 2020, even if a deal has not been struck.

Varadkar, however, said it would be difficult to secure a comprehensive agreement in time and there was a chance a deal might need to be approved by parliaments in all 27 EU countries -- any of which could hold it up.

"We need to get down to



Taoiseach Leo Varadkar, left listens to Michel Barnier, the EU's Brexit negotiator, during a press conference, outside the Government Buildings in Dublin, Monday, Jan. 27, 2020.

Associated Press

business very quickly trying to get that trade deal, which is absolutely essential for the Irish economy, as well as, of course, for Britain's as well," said Varadkar,

who is battling to retain his job in an election on Feb. 8. Ireland is the only EU country to share a land border with the U.K., and Britain is one of Ireland's top trading

partners. Britain and the EU are committed to striking a wide-ranging free trade agreement but appear to be on a collision course. □

UK introduces new fast-track visa to attract scientists

LONDON (AP) — British Prime Minister Boris Johnson introduced a new fast-track visa to attract more of the world's best scientists to the U.K. in hopes of creating a global science "superpower."

Johnson paired the announcement of the Global Talent route program with a pledge of 300 million pounds (\$392 million) for research into advanced mathematics. The money will help fund research-

ers and doctoral students whose work in math underpins myriad developments such as safer air travel, smart phone technology and artificial intelligence.

The new visa route will have no cap on the number of people able to come to the U.K. under the program. It starts next month.

"The UK has a proud history of scientific discovery, but to lead the field and face the challenges of the future we need to continue to in-

vest in talent and cutting edge research," Johnson said in a statement. "That is why as we leave the EU, I want to send a message that the U.K. is open to the most talented minds in the world, and stand ready to support them to turn their ideas into reality."

Britain is facing its biggest immigration shake-up in decades after it leaves the EU Friday.

After Brexit, EU citizens will lose the automatic right to



Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson leaves 10 Downing Street to attend the weekly session of Prime Ministers Questions in Parliament in London, Wednesday, Jan. 22, 2020.

Associated Press

live and work in the U.K., and Britons to settle in the bloc's 27 remaining nations.

That has sparked fears Britain may face shortages in key job areas. □

U.S. says mystery crash in Afghanistan was U.S. Air Force plane

By **RAHIM FAIEZ** and **KATHY GANNON**

Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)

— An American military aircraft crashed in eastern Afghanistan on Monday, the U.S. military said, adding that there were no indications so far it'd been brought down by enemy fire.

The spokesman for U.S. forces in Afghanistan, Col. Sonny Leggett, said that the military plane, a Bombardier E-11A, crashed in the Ghazni province and an investigation of its causes was ongoing.

Monday's plane crash is not expected to derail U.S.-Taliban peace talks if it turns out to have been an accident.

The Bombardier E-11A is a U.S. Air Force electronic surveillance plane. Video from the crash site circulating on social media appeared to show its charred ruins.

A Taliban spokesman and Afghan journalist affiliated with the militant group had earlier said the mystery crash was a U.S. military plane.

Tariq Ghazniwal, a journalist in the area, said that he saw the burning aircraft. In an exchange on Twitter, he told The Associated Press that he saw two bodies and the front of the aircraft was badly burned. He added that the aircraft's body and tail were hardly damaged. His information could not



A wreckage of a U.S. military aircraft that crashed in Ghazni province, Afghanistan, is seen Monday, Jan. 27, 2020.

Associated Press

be independently verified. Ghazniwal said the crash site was about 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) from a U.S. military base. Local Taliban have been deployed to protect the crash site, he said, and several other militants were combing the nearby village for two people they suspect may have survived the crash.

The Taliban hold much of Ghazni province and have total control over the local area of the crash.

Ghazniwal said the site was near a village called Sado Khelo, in the Deh Yak district. He also said the crash occurred soon after 1 p.m. local time, but residents

in the area did not report a loud crashing noise. He couldn't say whether the aircraft had been shot down but "the crash was not loud."

Images on social media purportedly of the crashed plane showed an aircraft bearing U.S. Air Force markings similar to other E-11A surveillance aircraft photographed by aviation enthusiasts. Visible registration numbers on the plane also appeared to match those aircraft.

The so-called Battlefield Airborne Communications Node can be carried on unmanned or crewed aircraft like the E-11A. It is used by

the military to extend the range of radio signals and can be used to convert the output of one device to another, such as connecting a radio to a telephone. Colloquially referred to by the U.S. military as "Wi-Fi in the sky," the BACN system is used in areas where communications are otherwise difficult, elevating signals above obstacles like mountains. The system is in regular use in Afghanistan.

The U.S. and Taliban are negotiating a reduction in hostilities or a cease-fire to allow a peace agreement to be signed that could bring home an estimated 13,000 American troops

and open the way to a broader post-war deal for Afghans. The Taliban currently control or hold sway over around half the country.

Local Afghan officials had said earlier on Monday that a passenger plane from Afghanistan's Ariana Airlines had crashed in the Taliban-held area of the eastern Ghazni province. However, Ariana Airlines told The Associated Press that none of its planes had crashed in Afghanistan.

The conflicting accounts could not immediately be reconciled.

Arif Noori, spokesman for the provincial governor, said the plane went down around 1:10 p.m. local time (8:40 a.m. GMT) in Deh Yak district, some 130 kilometers (80 miles) southwest of the capital Kabul. He said the crash site is in territory controlled by the Taliban. Two provincial council members also confirmed the crash.

But the acting director for Ariana Airlines, Mirwais Mirzakwal, dismissed reports that one the company's aircraft had crashed. The state-owned airline also released a statement on its website saying all its aircraft were operational and safe.

The mountainous Ghazni province sits in the foothills of the Hindu Kush mountains and is bitterly cold in winter. □

Brazil downpour displaces 30,000, bracing for more rain



A view of flooded houses caused by heavy rains in Sabara municipality, Minas Gerais state, Brazil, Friday, Jan. 24, 2020.

Associated Press

By **ANNA JEAN KAISER**

Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP)

— Over 30,000 people have been displaced by heavy rains in southeast Brazil that also killed 54 people and left 18 missing.

The storms in recent days caused floods and landslides, submerging entire neighborhoods and sending homes tumbling down hillsides in the states of Minas Gerais, Espirito Santo and Rio de Janeiro. Rains subsided by Monday, but were expected to resume later this week in some areas.

Flooded roads created violent rapids, sweeping up victims, cars and other debris.

Those evacuated were being housed in makeshift shelters in churches, schools and fire stations. Local authorities have asked for donations of clothes, sheets and mattresses for the victims.

In Minas Gerais, 15,000 people were evacuated and in Espirito Santo nearly 10,000 more, according to local rescue efforts.

In Rio, at least 6,000 were evacuated, according to local news media, citing

figures from various municipalities. Rio state authorities didn't immediately respond to a request for official data.

Local authorities warned that the Belo Horizonte metropolitan area, home to nearly 6 million people, could see up to 100 millimeters (4 inches) of rain in the next three days.

The city had 171 millimeters (6.7 inches) over one 24-hour period from Thursday to Friday, the highest rainfall in 110 years. Over 120 municipalities in Minas Gerais state have declared a state of emergency. □

UN report: Chilling details of Libya migrant center strike

By ISABEL DEBRE

CAIRO (AP) — The United Nations revealed on Monday chilling new details about an airstrike that smashed into a migrant detention center in Libya, killing at least 50 people.

The July attack, which ranked among the deadliest assaults on civilians since the start of Libya's civil war, sparked international condemnation and accusations of war crimes.

The 13-page report said the conduct of compound officials at the time of the deadly attack may have contributed to the high death toll.

It also documented numerous violations of international law by warring Libyan militias and urged further investigation to ensure accountability. It was published Monday by the U.N. Support Mission in Libya and the U.N. Human Rights Office.

The Tajoura detention facility, run by a militia allied with the U.N.-backed government based in the capital, Tripoli, placed civilian refugees "in grave danger" in manifold ways, the report said.

Not only did the center sit in a military complex beside an ammunition depot, making it a prime target for opposition forces laying siege to the capital, but guards at the center also prevented detainees from fleeing after the first airstrike hit.

Witnesses told U.N. investigators that they tried to escape but were stopped by guards and forced back inside.

"There are grounds to believe that migrants and refugees could have been saved, and their right to life protected, had they not been prevented from exiting following the first airstrike," which bombed the



In this July 3, 2019 file photo, debris covers the ground and an emergency vehicle after an airstrike at a detention center in Tajoura, east of Tripoli in Libya.

Associated Press

nearby weapons depot, the report said.

The second airstrike directly hit the hangar filled with migrants, killing at least 50 people and injuring over a hundred others.

Several witnesses alleged that the head of the detention center burst into the hangar, shooting and killing three refugees who tried to escape, the report added. Surveillance camera footage shows at least one guard brandishing an assault rifle between the airstrikes. The U.N. could not

verify the migrants' claims. Officials questioned by the U.N. denied the allegations. At least 6,000 migrants from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan and other nations are locked in dozens of detention facilities in Libya run by militias accused of torture and other abuses. Migrants seeking better lives in Europe often land in Libyan centers after perilous journeys at the mercy of traffickers who hold them for ransom from their families.

Rights groups have called

for the total shutdown of the detention centers, which are an integral and contentious part of the European Union's efforts to keep migration across the Mediterranean at bay.

Refugees held in the Tajoura facility had long accused officials of various abuses, including forced labor. Many told U.N. investigators that militiamen compelled them to clean weapons, load ammunition, offload military shipments and complete other dangerous tasks. □

Gambia arrests 137 in protests urging president to step down

DAKAR, Senegal (AP) — Gambia's police have arrested 137 people amid protests calling for the president to step down after three years in power, the government said Monday, a startling turn for a country whose leader has vowed reforms and justice for the repression of the past.

Security forces used tear gas Sunday to break up the thousands of demonstrators, worrying many Gambians who lived under the oppressive rule of former President Yahya Jammeh for more than 22 years. Jammeh flew into exile in 2017 after an election loss to Adama Barrow.

At least 18 paramilitary members and seven civilians were injured in Sunday's confrontation, the government said. Barrow's election win in

2016 was celebrated as a new beginning for the tiny West African nation. When he came to power he said he would look into calling for new elections after three years. Last year, however, some members of the coalition that backed him supported his remaining in office for the five years allowed in the constitution. Some Gambians have formed a movement called Operation 3-Years Jotna, which means Three Years is Enough.

On Sunday, Gambia's government banned the group, calling it a "subversive, violent and illegal movement," according to a statement from spokesman Ebrima G. Sankareh.

The government said the movement never registered and is determined to illegally unseat the constitu-

tionally elected president. Barrow's government also suspended two radio stations pending investigations into accusations they peddled "incendiary messages and allowed their media to be used as a platform for inciting violence" by encouraging Gambians to join the movement.

The Committee to Protect Journalists said it is investigating reports of journalists being arrested and assaulted, along with the radio shutdowns.

"It is no longer the era of dictator #YahyaJammeh. Authorities must protect press freedom & the public's right to know," the group said on Twitter.

A regional director with Amnesty International, Marta Colomer, said the crackdown on protesters had "alarming echoes of



In this Thursday, Dec. 1, 2016 file photo, Gambia's President Yahya Jammeh shows his inked finger before voting in Banjul, Gambia.

Associated Press

Gambia's brutal past." "There have been some significant improvements in the country's human rights record since President Adama Barrow came to power, but the use of excessive force by security forces to disperse protesters risks fueling tensions and steering Gambia back to dark days of repression," she said.

The clampdown comes amid reports that former dictator Jammeh wants to return to Gambia.

On Saturday, hundreds of victims of his rule demonstrated in the capital, Banjul, demanding justice for human rights abuses committed under his regime. Other marches earlier this month by Jammeh supporters called for his return to be allowed.

Gambia's Justice Minister Aboubacarr Tambadou has made it clear that Jammeh will face an accountability process if he steps into the country. □



Travelers from Beijing , wearing masks, arrive at Charles de Gaulle airport, north of Paris, early Monday, Jan. 27, 2020.

Associated Press

Countries evaluate evacuation of citizens in virus epicenter

TOKYO (AP) — Countries with citizens in the central Chinese city that's the epicenter of a viral outbreak are planning evacuations as the number of illnesses grow and China takes drastic measures to try to stop the spread of the virus. A look at steps being taken:

— **CHINA:** The government cut transportation links to and from the city of Wuhan on Jan. 22 and has since expanded those controls to several nearby cities. Anyone traveling from Wuhan is required to register and quarantine themselves for 14 days — the virus' maximum incubation period. Hong Kong barred entry to travelers from Hubei province and told Hong Kong residents returning from the area to quarantine themselves at home.

— **JAPAN:** Chief government spokesman Yoshihide Suga said 560 Japanese citizens are confirmed in Hubei and chartered evacuation flights are being prepared to leave "as soon as possible." The Japanese Embassy in Beijing said the initial evacuation is limited to those in Wuhan. Evacuees are expected to include employees of Honda Motor Co., Tokyo Electron, Aeon Co. and other Japanese companies operating in Wuhan.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said his Cabinet will designate the new coronavirus subject to forced hospitalization and isolation. Such preventative measures appear to be preparation for the evacuation.

— **UNITED STATES:** The U.S. Consulate in Wuhan plans a charter flight to Southern California to for its personnel and some other Americans. The State Department said the flight will leave Wednesday morning for Ontario, California. The plane will refuel in Anchorage, Alaska, where the passengers will be re-screened, according to the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services.

— **FRANCE:** Health Minister Agnes Buzyn said French citizens who want to leave Wuhan will be taken on a direct flight to France in the middle of the week, and then held in quarantine for 14 days. France has some 800 citizens in Wuhan. French automaker PSA, which produces Peugeot and Citroen cars, said it was evacuating its expatriate employees and their families from Wuhan and quarantining them in another city. It didn't elaborate.

— **SRI LANKA:** The embassy in Beijing has applied for a

Sri Lankan Airlines plan to be allowed to land at the Wuhan airport to airlift home 32 Sri Lankan students and their family members. The foreign ministry also said it was working to bring back all other Sri Lankan students throughout China. About 860 Sri Lankan students are in China.

— **GERMANY:** Foreign Minister Heiko Maas said that his country is considering evacuating its citizens from Wuhan, with a government crisis response committee meeting soon with medical experts to evaluate the situation. He said the number of German citizens in Wuhan is in the double digits. The foreign ministry currently advises Germans to refrain from or postpone "non-essential travel" to China.

— **EUROPEAN UNION:** Portugal says it has joined with other smaller European Union countries to organize a possible evacuation of their citizens from Wuhan. Foreign Minister Augusto Santos Silva said 14 Portuguese have asked to be taken out of the city. Santos Silva says other EU countries with low numbers of potential evacuees are considering a joint operation and have approached Chinese health authorities about gaining clearance for it. □



In this Wednesday, April 9, 2008 file photo, Delphine Boel, left, poses for photographers with her recently published book, along with her husband, US citizen from Houston, Texas, James O'Hare, right, in the Grand Place of Brussels. After years of legal fights, a decades-old royal paternity scandal saw a major breakthrough Monday, Jan. 27, 2020.

Associated Press

Belgian ex-king Albert concedes claimant is his daughter

By **RAF CASERT**

BRUSSELS (AP) — After years of court battles, Belgium's former King Albert II is no longer fighting a claim that he is the father of artist and sculptor Delphine Boel, bringing a major breakthrough in the decades-old royal paternity scandal. A statement delivered by his lawyers to Belgian media on Monday said that "scientific conclusions indicate that he is the biological father of Mrs. Delphine Boël." It came after Albert II last year finally agreed to a DNA test.

The royal acknowledgement immediately dominated the evening newscasts across the nation. Boel had been trying to establish paternity for years, and Albert never publicly denied being her father but had long refused to provide DNA.

King Albert II, who abdicated in 2013 for health reasons, said Monday that even if there were judicial arguments left to pursue, legal paternity is not necessarily equal to biological fatherhood. He added that even if the case could be continued on procedural grounds, he decided not

to do so "to end with dignity this painful procedure." Boel's lawyer, Marc Uytendaele, said on RTBF network that "her reaction was one of relief, emotion but also shows a wound that will not heal."

Rumors about Albert and Boel's mother, the aristocratic wife of a well-heeled industrialist, had been around for years. But the news that the king may have had a child with her broke into the open when a biography of Albert's wife, Queen Paola, was published in 1999.

In his Christmas message to the nation that year, King Albert alluded to a past infidelity and said he and Queen Paola lived through a "crisis" in the late 1960s that almost wrecked their marriage, but that "a long while ago" they overcame their marital problems.

Six years ago, Boel, who bears a striking resemblance to some members of the royal family, opened court proceedings to prove that Albert is her father.

Boel has always said that she brought the paternity case due to anger since she was being cold-shouldered by the royal family. □



Eduardo's Beach Shack to serve Breakfast at all new Boardwalk Boutique Hotel

PALM BEACH — Boardwalk Boutique Hotel Aruba is announcing a new partnership with local vendor Eduardo's Beach Shack. Boardwalk recently reopened as a boutique hotel with 46 Caribbean casitas, and with the expansion came additional services. The breakfast service that Eduardo's Beach Shack prepares daily includes savory & healthy breakfast packages, along with fresh juices, their famous smoothies and much more. The on-property service is exclusively available to hotel guests of Boardwalk Boutique Hotel.

All items are prepared with unprocessed wholefoods, with plenty of vegan & gluten-free options available. Breakfast can be ordered through room services, and delivered to the private patio of a casita, or enjoyed at the brand new Lobby Café. Eduardo's Beach Shack handles all other food & beverage items at Boardwalk Boutique Hotel as well, including fresh grab & go items, daily poolside bar service and the weekly happy hour cocktail.

"Our partnership with Eduardo's Beach Shack is such a logical step. We are both family-owned, local companies with a small footprint joining forces in what we both do best: bringing great & friendly service with a good, consistent product that leaves people feeling nourished and relaxed while in paradise", says Kimberly Rooijackers, owner of Boardwalk Boutique Hotel. "So you get to enjoy the best of both worlds: healthy, nourishing food and beverages provided by Eduardo's on one of Aruba's most relaxing settings, in the privacy of your own Caribbean casita at our boutique hotel", Rooijackers concludes.

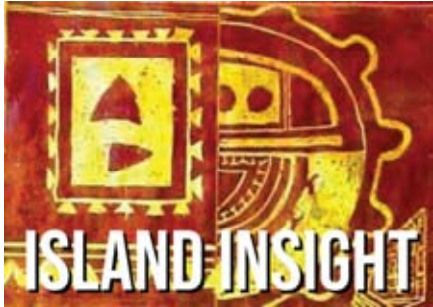
Eduardo's Beach Shack has required a strong name in the last years and continues to see a growing customer base at their main location, beach front at Palm Beach. Eduardo's Beach Shack started out over 13 years ago as a new initiative to offer fresh, healthy and vegan breakfast options and smoothies, and is now known as Aruba's best smoothie bar.

"We support the sustainable movement to contribute to a better planet and thrive in providing people with choices in every dietary requirement. And we fully embrace the authentic, colourful Caribbean character in everything we do and represent", shares Eduardo's Beach Shack owner Michelle.

Boardwalk Boutique Hotel Aruba consists of 46 casita's amidst lush gardens, tucked away on a historic coconut plantation, just steps from Aruba's beautiful Palm Beach. Boardwalk Boutique Hotel recently expanded by adding a multi-experiential pool with overwater hammocks, a gym with spa and yoga services on request, and a spacious Lobby with a Lobby Café for fresh grab & go items. Boardwalk Boutique Hotel is consistently ranked the #2 best hotel in Aruba.

Boardwalk Boutique Hotel is consistently ranked the #2 best hotel in Aruba. More on boardwalkaruba.com.





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Valuable pollinators and associated superstitious beliefs Episode 54- LIV

ORANJESTAD — Bats provide humans with uncalculal benefits at the cost of some threats. Bats are great pollinators and feeds basicly from night-blooming columnar cactus flowers and fruits and agave flowers and many indangered plants and trees of the island. Bat dung has been mined as guano from caves and used as fertilizer. A healthy bat population is crucial for a healthy ecosystem. In Aruba approximately eigh different bat species have been identified: insect eating bats, fruit and nectar eating bats. Both insectivores and frugivores species are masters when it comes to preserving a balance in our islands fragil biodiversity. If only we aknowledge how endangered these flying friends are and how to preserve their habitat.

Insectivorous bats banquit on insects from sundown and darker hours, saving the islands anually budged millions of aruban florins of imported toxics pesticides. There are fewer insects when bats are around that hunts insects and there are less insect pests that causes damage to vegetables and garden plants. If open air agriculture is to become a next call, farmers don't have to invest as much in pesticides and will build bat roosting boxes in order to welcome them to stay and propagate while collecting their fertilizing guano. One bat eats equally up to three times their weighth on an average night!

Several species of bats of Aruba eat nectar. As mentioned, many types of our endemic plants of our ecosystem rely on bats for pollination and seed dispersal, such as the quebedexi and huliba tree. The agave species, the candelabra cacti's such as the cadushi, the cadushi plushi and the breba etc. All around the island and in our national park, long-nose and long-tongue bats are perfectly adapted to pollinate these plants, and they provide extensive value to the biosphere. So next time you see our agave in bloom say thank you to the bats.

People are often fascinated with bats. In fact, one of the largest tourist attractions in Austin Texas is where more than 1.5 million bats roost during the summer months. More than 100,000 tourists come to this area annually.

Bats are associated with different cultures and mean different things to different people.

In many cultures, bats are popularly associated with darkness, evil, witchcraft and death.

Continued on next page



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Continued from previous page

To the Amerindian tribes of the northwestern United States, bats are symbols of diligence; while in the Great Plains, they imparted wisdom on their people. In the southwest and Mexico, they are representative of death and rebirth, because they go underground in the early morning, and then appear again each night in a noisy hoard. So they are reborn every night, flooding out from their caves.

The mythology of the Mesoamericans have the bat as a shadow of darkness that looms over them. It is a symbol of the land of the dead and part of the underworld. When a person would see one it could mean that death or destruction was sure to happen in their near future.

The pre-Columbian culture displayed the bat as one of their legendary gods. They are often part of the paintings and drawing of older times. Bat figures are also found in prehistoric artwork and stone work like pendants or pottery.

The Mayans had a bat god called Camazote, who was said to have tested human souls with a large sword. This is slightly negative, since

the bat is associated with violence. In Biblical tradition, bats were believed to be messengers of Satan. The Puritans believed that if a bat flew close to someone, somebody was trying to bewitch them. The Chinese, however, view the bat as a symbol of happiness. They are amazing creatures. Bats often represent death in the sense of letting go of the old, and bringing in the new. They are symbols of transition,

of initiation, and the start of a new beginning.

Nevertheless, bats were very important to the early settlers of Aruba, the recurrence of incorporating these flying mammals in to their artistic expressions stands as testimony in our Native Art Living Gallery at Westpunt 37A, Noord.

To immerse in what Aruba is all

about. Its people, its origins, its animals and culture, we highly recommend you to book your visit for our renowned cultural encounter session which has been entertaining curious, scientist and bohemians for decades. Mail us at ethniana-tiva03@gmail.com to confirm your participation. Our facilities and activities take place close to high rise hotels.



Aruban born and bred Steve Francees has a passion for photography. Being a local photographer he knows the hidden gems of this island and captures them in an amazing way. As a Family and Landscape photographer Steve is ready to create your next 'vacation memories', morning and/or sunset shots. T: (297) 738-0777, M: stevefrancees@hotmail.com, www.instagram.com/stevefrancees and www.stevefrancees.com



Where Locals hangout on Sunday after noon.



Someone asked me this question last week on social media so I went on taking this drone photo. We all love Arashi beach but on Sundays locals go just a little bit more north of Arashi beach and to get here you must take a left turn after Arashi where you will find two dirt road and on a Sundays you will see a lot of our local families at this spot.

The Dr Eloy Arends house.



Yes you can get married here in Aruba and it's going to be here in this green building that is now the Civil Town House in Oranjestad. Dr Eloy Arends was Aruba's first general practitioner and took 3 years building this house from 1922- 1925 and presented it to her bride Maria Monica upon returning from their honeymoon. So this building was built on love for love.

Casibari Rock Formation.



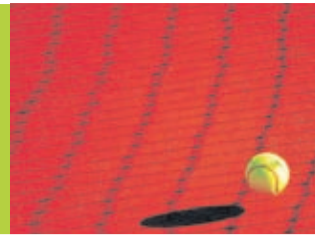
There are many things that set Aruba apart from all other islands and one of them are the big rocks that can be seen at various locations on our island. Casibari Rock formation is a must visit and is located very close on the main road at Paradera. At this park you can have a seat under the kwihi trees and the cactuses. There is a stairway where you can climb on top of this giant rock and will give you the opportunity to have a view of the Paradera area including the Hooiberg Hill.

The secret of Red flower at Sunset.



Yes, there is something magical about red flowers at Sunset and you can try it and let me know. Red flowers are the most typical choice when people want to express their love and passion for someone but at sunset it creates a very deep feelings of love. Dresses with red flowers imprint will also add this special love effect into your sunset photos.

SPORTS



Lakers' next game postponed after Kobe Bryant's death

By GREG BEACHAM
AP Sports Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The NBA has postponed the Los Angeles Lakers' next game against the Clippers on Tuesday night after the deaths of retired superstar Kobe Bryant, his daughter and seven others in a helicopter crash.

The league announced the decision in a statement Monday, saying it "was made out of respect for the Lakers organization."

Bryant's helicopter crashed Sunday, and the Lakers learned about it while flying home from an East Coast road trip. LeBron James and several other players appeared to be visibly affected by the news when they got off the plane.

"The Los Angeles Lakers would like to thank all of you for the tremendous outpouring of support and condolences," the Lakers organization said in a statement after the postponement was announced. "This is a very difficult time for all of us."

The 16-time NBA champion franchise made grief counselors available to employees Monday after the loss of Bryant, who spent his entire 20-year NBA career with the Lakers.

Lakers owner Jeanie Buss was quite close to Bryant, and Lakers general manager Rob Pelinka was Bryant's agent during his playing career.

Dwight Howard is the only current Lakers player who played with Bryant for the franchise for one season back in 2012-13, but the players all knew him. □

BLAZER HOT

Lillard scores 50 as Blazers beat Pacers 139-129

Portland Trail Blazers guard Damian Lillard, center, hits a shot over Indiana Pacers center Goga Bitadze, left, and Indiana Pacers forward Justin Holiday, right, during the first half of an NBA basketball game in Portland, Ore., Sunday, Jan. 26, 2020.

Associated Press
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Steady Nadal beats animated Kyrgios in 4 at Australian Open

By **HOWARD FENDRICH**

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)

— Rafael Nadal left the muttering and the preening, the underarm serving and the 'tweening, to his younger, flashier opponent, Nick Kyrgios.

Surely, Nadal was content to collect the win in the latest installment of their rivalry.

The No. 1-ranked Nadal kept his thoughts to himself and limited his shot-making to the more traditional variety in an entertaining 6-3, 3-6, 7-6 (6), 7-6 (4) victory over home-crowd favorite Kyrgios on Monday to reach the Australian Open quarterfinals and get closer to a record-tying 20th Grand Slam title.

These two guys don't like each other. But Nadal had nothing but nice things to say after improving his head-to-head record to 5-3 against Kyrgios.

"When he wants to play, when he is focused on what he's doing, I think he's a very important player for our sport," Nadal said, "because he has a big talent and is one of these players that can be very, very interesting for the crowd."

While Kyrgios was up to some of his usual trick shots and antics, what he never did was waver in his effort, something folks often accuse him of.

"Today," Nadal said, "I think he played very serious, tried



Australia's Nick Kyrgios is airborne as he attempts to return a shot to Spain's Rafael Nadal during their fourth round singles match at the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia, Monday, Jan. 27, 2020.

all the time his best."

It certainly meant a lot to Kyrgios, who said: "I'm shattered to have lost tonight. These are the matches that I want to win the most."

Here's how the elevated stakes and tension affected both men: At 5-all in the pivotal third-set tiebreaker, Kyrgios double-faulted. That offered up a gift-wrapped set point. But Nadal failed to take advantage because he double-faulted right back.

Still, two points later, the 23rd-seeded Kyrgios put a forehand into the net, and the set was Nadal's. Not long after, Kyrgios double-faulted again to get broken at love.

That put Nadal ahead 2-1 in the fourth, seemingly in charge.

"Against Nick," Nadal would say afterward, "you are never (in) control."

Sure enough, Nadal faltered while serving for the win at 5-4, double-faulting to create a pair of break points, the second of which Kyrgios converted with a jumping forehand and celebrated by throwing his head back and screaming. Spectators rose and roared and waved their Australian flags in support of the 24-year-old from Canberra. "A scary game," Nadal called it, acknowledging he was hampered by nerves.

But he regrouped and pulled the win out in the closing tiebreaker, which ended with Kyrgios putting a forehand into the net.

Sure, the cool, breezy conditions played to Nadal's advantage and dulled Kyrgios' power-based style. But there also was this: Nadal finished with more than twice as many winners as unforced errors, 64-27.

"I'd have to win a point three times to win a point," Kyrgios said.

Kyrgios delivered 25 aces and some memorable moments -- including walking out on court and warming up for the match in a No. 8 Los Angeles Lakers jersey to honor Kobe Bryant, the

five-time NBA champion and 18-time All-Star who died in a helicopter crash Sunday at age 41.

Kyrgios switched to a No. 24 Bryant shirt for his post-match news conference and described himself as emotional at the news.

A video tribute to Bryant was played on the Rod Laver Arena scoreboards before Monday's match.

On Wednesday, the 33-year-old Nadal's 41st career Grand Slam quarterfinal will be against No. 5 Dominic Thiem in a rematch of the past two French Open finals, both won by Nadal.

The other men's quarterfinal on the top half of the bracket is No. 7 Alexander Zverev vs. No. 15 Stan Wawrinka.

Nadal vs. Kyrgios was fascinating to watch, in part because of the quality of the play and in part because of the subplot of their negative feelings toward each other.

"When I criticized him in the past," Nadal said, "it's because I thought he did a couple of things that are not right and not the right image for our sport and for the kids."

They traded verbal barbs through the media last year after Kyrgios beat Nadal at a tournament in Mexico (which is why a spectator kept yelling "Acapulco!" in the stadium Monday). □

Associated Press



United States' Serena Williams and her coach Patrick Mouratoglou react during a practice session ahead of the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne, Australia, Friday, Jan. 17, 2020.

Associated Press

Women's tennis tour to test coaching from stands this season

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)

— The WTA is going to test out allowing coaching from the stands at non-Grand Slam tournaments for the rest of this season.

The tour said Monday that the change amounts to letting coaches offer the sort of hand signals and simple instructions that happen currently even though they have been against the rules — but rarely penalized.

"The premise around this trial is that we feel coaching is taking place already from the box," WTA spokeswoman

an Amy Binder said, "and, as it's difficult to regulate, this allows for consistency in rules across all matches."

She said the new coaching policy will begin the week of Feb. 17 and be used at all WTA Premier and International tournaments.

Coaches now can say a "few words when their player is on the same side of the court," Binder said.

What the WTA doesn't want is more coaching from the stands than is done now. On-court coaching during breaks in the action will

continue, where a coach goes down to the sideline for a conversation with her or his player.

The Grand Slam tournaments do not allow any coaching during matches for men or women, and the ATP doesn't allow any coaching at any of its events.

The issue came to the forefront at the 2018 U.S. Open, when Serena Williams' coach, Patrick Mouratoglou, acknowledged trying to send her a signal during the final. □

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Staley's patience pays off with 49ers trip to Super Bowl

By JOSH DUBOW

AP Pro Football Writer
SANTA CLARA, Calif. (AP)

— When the San Francisco 49ers were mired in a two-win season back in 2016 and headed to a third straight offseason with a coaching change, Joe Staley wondered if it was still worth the sacrifices needed to play offensive line in such a grueling sport. He had gone from three straight trips to the NFC title game to a three-year stretch that featured only 15 wins and three coaching changes.

That's when coach Kyle Shanahan and general manager John Lynch arrived and Staley's outlook changed.

"I'd be lying to you if I said, 'No, I always believed,'" Staley said. "But there were some dark years here in the franchise, it's been well written about and reported on. But once I met Kyle and John and the vision they had for the franchise, I was pretty confident we were going to get there. I was just happy I was still feeling the way I felt, still had years left to play, was going to be able to see this through."

The turnaround was far from sudden as the Niners lost their first nine games under the new regime in 2017 and then started 1-7 the next year, winning a combined 10 games in two seasons.

But Staley never lost his faith, signing a \$28 million, two-year extension this off-season that keeps him under contract through 2021. That patience has been rewarded with his second trip

to the Super Bowl.

"It really played out exactly like they spelled it out in 2017, so once they were here, I knew it was a special, special group," Staley said. "Kyle's a special coach and the staff that he's brought here has been unbelievable. Top to bottom it's a special team."

The feeling between coach and player is mutual, with Shanahan saying he's grateful for the praise from Staley. Shanahan also said he understood the frustration Staley felt with losing but never saw any on-field reasons why he should step away.

"I thought he looked as good when we got here as he ever had and I think he looks even better now," Shanahan said. "That always surprised me, but I think Joe really loves football and I don't think he wasn't having that much fun. It's never fun when you aren't winning and that's what was hard for me. I thought he did buy in, and to start out 0-9 and watch his frustration with that. He kept doing it the right way." The 35-year-old Staley, a first-round pick in 2007, has been a big part of the turnaround as he finishes up his 13th season in San Francisco that has included six coaches and multiple roster overhauls.

Through it all the constant has been Staley, the only player on the active roster left from the team that went to the Super Bowl following the 2012 season under Jim Harbaugh.

"He's seen the ups and downs," teammate Mike



San Francisco 49ers offensive tackle Joe Staley speaks during a news conference at the team's NFL football training facility in Santa Clara, Calif., Thursday, Jan. 23, 2020.

Associated Press

McGlinchey said. "He's been to one before with this organization and there were some dark years that followed that and the dark years started happening when he was in the latter end of his career which is really hard on a player. But he stuck with it and we're starting to reap the rewards. I'm super excited for him to be able to get this opportunity and hopefully we can win it for him."

Despite being plagued by injuries all season after missing six games with a broken leg suffered in Week 2 and then three more after breaking his finger in his first

game back in November, Staley is still performing at an elite level.

He's a key part of a dominant line that has powered a ground game that has rushed for 471 yards in two playoff games and has protected Jimmy Garoppolo well all season.

"He's returned to vintage Joe Staley," McGlinchey said. "That's been really helpful to this football team."

Staley has allowed pressure on just 2.8% of his pass blocks, according to Pro Football Focus, ranking second among all tackles this season to Baltimore All-Pro

Ronnie Stanley.

But his impact goes far beyond just blocking as he is one of the leaders of the team.

"It's huge to have him, especially just big moments, games like this," Garoppolo said. "We've had them throughout the entire end of the season, it feels like, these big games. But, just having a guy like that who could calm everything down, put everything in perspective, things like that. Joe's done phenomenal on the field, and the things he does off the field go very unnoticed, but it carries us a long way." □

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Sagstrom wins Gainbridge LPGA for 1st LPGA Tour title

BOCA RATON, Fla. (AP) — Madelene Sagstrom won the Gainbridge LPGA at Boca Rio on Sunday for her first LPGA Tour title, birdieing the par-3 17th to tie for the lead and winning with a par when Nasa Hataoka missed a 3-footer on the last.

Sagstrom finished with a 2-under 70 for a 17-under 271 total at rain-softened Boca Rio Golf Club.

"I put something on the Instagram in the beginning of the week, saying I'm determined that 2020 is going to be the best season yet. I didn't know it was going to be this good right away," Sagstrom said. "But no, I have worked really hard over many years now, and I think that the biggest change or the biggest journey I have had is within myself and my mental game." Hataoka shot 69. The Japanese player birdied Nos. 15 and 16 to take the lead, then fell into a tie when



Madelene Sagstrom holds her trophy after winning the Gainbridge LPGA golf tournament at Boca Rio, Sunday, Jan. 26, 2020, in Boca Raton, Fla.

Associated Press

Sagstrom birdied the 17th and lost with the bogey on the par-4 18th. "It kind of helps me out with the beginning two tournaments, being there at the top, gives me a little strength to keep on going

for the following many tournaments coming ahead," Hataoka said. "Missing the win gives me more motivation to keep on going for the next many tournaments coming." She also finished second

last week in the season-opening Diamond Resorts Tournament of Champions, losing to Gaby Lopez on the seventh extra hole in a Monday finish.

Sagstrom bogeyed two of the first five holes, then rebounded with birdies on Nos. 8, 10 and 11 — chipping in on 10.

"It doesn't matter how you start," Sagstrom said. "If you just continue fighting, things can go your way. And I just told myself, 'Keep fighting, keep fighting.'"

Sagstrom made a 4-footer for birdie on 17, then saved par from 5 feet on 18,

The 27-year-old Swede and former LSU star opened with a 72, shot a career-best 62 on Friday to take a one-stroke lead and doubled her advantage Saturday with a 67.

"I have never been in a situation like this before, so obviously it was all new to me," Sagstrom said about taking the lead into the final

round. "I didn't know how I was going to handle it or if it was going to go my way or not, so my whole goal today was just go out and stay patient and do what I have done the other days." Sagstrom won in her 69th career LPGA Tour start. She's the 12th Swede to win on the tour, and the first since Pernilla Lindberg in the 2018 ANA Inspiration. Sagstrom won three times on the Symetra Tour in 2016 and led the money list to graduate to the big tour. Danielle Kang was third at 15 under after a 69. She parred the final eight holes. "I kept hitting it to 30, 35 feet," Kang said. "And they're not easy to make. So, it's hard to two-putt, to be honest."

Celine Boutier shot 70 to finish fourth at 13 under. Sei Young Kim was 11 under after a 73. The tournament was the first official event in Boca Raton since the 1989 Oldsmobile LPGA Classic. □

Lillard scores 50 points, Trail Blazers outscore Pacers

By The Associated Press
PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Damian Lillard had 50 points and 13 assists, becoming the first Portland player with 40-plus points in three straight games, and the Trail Blazers beat the Indiana Pacers 139-129 on a Sunday night marked by grief over the death of NBA great Kobe Bryant. The Trail Blazers honored Bryant with 24 seconds of silence before the game, and the team took a 24-second shot-clock violation at the start before the Pacers took an eight-second timeline penalty, recognizing Bryant's jersey numbers. Several fans at the Moda Center wore Lakers jerseys in salute to a player who spent his entire career with rival Los Angeles.

CJ McCollum returned after a three-game absence because of an ankle injury and added 28 points for the Blazers. Hassan Whiteside had 21 points and 14 rebounds. Domantas Sabonis — whose father, Arvydas, played for the Blazers, had 27 points, 14 assists and 11 rebounds for the Pacers for his second career triple-double. His first came last Sunday at Denver.

There was a pall over the game because of the helicopter crash earlier Sunday that killed Bryant, one of his daughters, and seven others in Southern California.

PELICANS 123, CELTICS 108
NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Zion Williamson had 21 points and 11 rebounds in 27 minutes and New Orleans beat Boston for its first victory since the rookie star joined the lineup.

Jrue Holiday had 25 points, JJ Redick added 17 and Brandon Ingram had 16 to help Orleans snap a two-game slide.

Williamson played his most minutes yet in his third game back from arthroscopic knee surgery performed the day before the regular season opened. He had played the first five or so minutes of each quarter in his first two games, but the Pelicans made an adjustment to his fourth-quarter

usage to allow the NBA's top overall draft choice out of Duke to be on the court for the final minutes Sunday.

It paid off. Williamson scored eight points in the final three minutes — highlighted by a dunk on a baseline cut as he was fouled — and the Pelicans pulled away.

Kemba Walker scored 35 points, Gordon Hayward had 23 and Jaylen Brown 20 for the Celtics. They fell behind for good in the first quarter and trailed by as many as 23 in the third quarter.

KNICKS 110, NETS 107

NEW YORK (AP) — Julius Randle had 22 points and 15 rebounds to lead New York past Brooklyn, which played without Kyrie Irving following the news of Kobe Bryant's death.

Madison Square Garden was the site of some of Bryant's biggest highlights and his picture was on the marquis outside.

Inside, there was little of the energy that MSG contained whenever Bryant played here, save for a "Kobe! Kobe!" chant after a moment of silence before the game.

Marcus Morris added 21 points to help the Knicks earn a split of the New York season series.

Spencer Dinwiddie, back in the starting lineup with Irving out, scored 23 points for the Nets. Irving was out the arena and warming up before leaving after learning the news about Bryant. The Nets said he was not with the team for personal reasons.

HAWKS 152, WIZARDS 133

ATLANTA (AP) — Trae Young had 45 points and 14 assists in an emotional game for the first-time All-Star, helping Atlanta beat Washington.

Young looked up toward the rafters several times to honor Kobe Bryant, his mentor and favorite NBA star who died in a helicopter crash earlier in the day. Young wore a No. 8 jersey to acknowledge Bryant during the first few seconds of the game and dressed up his shoes with a heartfelt



New Orleans Pelicans forward Zion Williamson (1) goes to the basket against Boston Celtics center Vincent Poirier (77) in the second half of an NBA basketball game in New Orleans, Sunday, Jan. 26, 2020. The Pelicans won 123-108.

Associated Press

tribute as well.

De'Andre Hunter finished with 25 points, and Kevin Huerter added 18 for Atlanta.

Bradley Beal scored 40 points for Washington.

RAPTORS 110, SPURS 106

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Pascal Siakam scored 35 points to lead Toronto past San Antonio.

The teams each dribbled out the 24-second shot clock in remembrance of the No. 24 worn by Kobe Bryant, the former NBA great killed in a helicopter crash at age 41.

Kyle Lowry added 16 points to help Toronto win its seventh straight game.

DeMar DeRozan and Derrick White led San Antonio with 14 points each.

CLIPPERS 112, MAGIC 97

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — Kawhi Leonard scored 15 of his 31 points in a big third quarter and Los Angeles beat Orlando.

Leonard scored seven straight points for the Clippers in the quarter to help Los Angeles stretch a four-point lead to 10 as they pulled away to their sixth win in seven games.

Landry Shamet and Montrezl Harrell scored 19 points each for the Clippers. Leonard had 14 rebounds, leading Los Angeles to a 53-45 advantage.

Michael Carter-Williams led Orlando with 15 points.

NUGGETS 117, ROCKETS 110

DENVER (AP) — Nikola Jokic had 24 points, 12 rebounds and 11 assists for his ninth triple-double of the season and Jerami Grant scored a season-high 25 points in Denver's victory over Houston.

The Nuggets held a moment of silence before the tip-off, with fans chanting, "Kobe! Kobe!" right after.

Russell Westbrook scored 22 of his 32 points in the second half for Houston.

James Harden sat out with a bruised left thigh.

GRIZZLIES 114, SUNS 109

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — Ja Morant scored 14 of his 23 points in the fourth quarter to help Memphis hold off Phoenix.

Playing hours after news that former NBA star Kobe Bryant was killed in a helicopter accident, the Grizzlies won the opening tip and immediately took a 24-second clock violation.

When the Suns took possession, they stayed in the backcourt for an 8-second violation — the 24 and 8 representing Bryant's two numbers during his NBA career. As the Memphis crowd rose in appreciation of Bryant, they began chanting "Kobe! Kobe!"

Jaren Jackson Jr. and Dillon Brooks finished with 20 points each for Memphis. Devin Booker led the Suns with 36 points, and Kelly Oubre Jr. added 27 points. □

NHL players in favor of 'international flavor' All-Star idea

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Nathan MacKinnon enjoyed when the NHL All-Star Game featured North America against the World in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Something similar could be coming back next year, but with a twist.

The league is in talks with players to bring what Commissioner Gary Bettman called a "distinct international flavor" to 2021 All-Star Weekend in South Florida. Not quite North America versus the World but more like a miniature 3-on-3 tournament with players representing the U.S., Canada and other top hockey countries.

It's not a replacement for the Olympics, but players are largely in favor of spicing up All-Star festivities and playing for more than divisional pride.

"Ooh, that would be cool," Canada-born Dallas Stars center Tyler Seguin said. "I wonder if that would get it even more competitive. I'm not sure. It would be interesting."

Think about MacKinnon, Connor McDavid and Sidney Crosby playing for Canada against Americans Auston Matthews, Patrick Kane and Jack



Tampa Bay Lightning goalie Andrei Vasilevskiy (88) reaches back to block a shot by Edmonton Oilers forward Connor McDavid (97) in the NHL hockey All Star final game Saturday, Jan. 25, 2020, in St. Louis.

Associated Press

Eichel, or Sweden's Victor Hedman, Elias Pettersson and Filip Forsberg facing off against Finland's Patrik Laine, Aleksander Barkov and Mikko Rantanen.

"I think any time you get some country rivalries going, there'll be a little more aggressiveness," U.S.-born Carolina Hurricanes defenseman Jaccob Slavin said. "It would be cool."

The NHL is five years into

holding a 3-on-3 All-Star tournament by division. The winning team gets to split \$1 million, and the wide-open ice has proven more entertaining than the old format.

"I like the 3-on-3 the most," said Seguin, who has made six All-Star appearances. "I played in a couple of the 5-on-5 games and they were fun, but I think the 3-on-3 is the best."

Given the success of the 3-on-3, it would be silly to abandon it now. But after the league and players couldn't come to an agreement on holding a World Cup of Hockey in the winter of 2021, an international All-Star tournament would be a consolation prize. "I don't think anything really means as much as the Olympics, to be honest with you," Kane said. "But I

think it's always an honor to play for your country."

After the International Olympic Committee didn't give the NHL the same insurance, travel and accommodations benefits in 2018 as the previous five games, the league ended its streak of participating. And despite significant investment in and fascination with the Chinese market, there's no guarantee NHL players go to Beijing in 2022.

"I can't say that with certainty — not to give people false hope," Bettman said. "From our standpoint, we believe and our experience both with going to five Olympics and then not going to Pyeongchang tells us that going is extraordinarily disruptive to the season."

Because the 2016 World Cup of Hockey featured a Team North American with the best age 23 and under players from the U.S. and Canada, Crosby, McDavid and MacKinnon have never played together, and neither have Matthews, Kane and Eichel. Doing so at All-Star Weekend would provide some entertainment, but Kane is still holding out hope that it can happen for real in Beijing. □

Diggins-Smith wants to leave Dallas and play elsewhere



In this Wednesday, Aug. 30, 2017, file photo, Dallas Wings guard Skylar Diggins-Smith, center, looks to pass against Chicago Sky forward Jessica Breland, left, and guard Cappie Pondexter during the second half of a WNBA basketball game in Rosemont, Ill.

By DOUG FEINBERG HARTFORD, Conn. (AP) — Skylar Diggins-Smith wants to find a new team to play for next season. "I don't plan on playing in

Dallas next year," Diggins-Smith told The Associated Press in a phone interview Sunday. "I'm happy to be playing in this league and I want to play."

Diggins-Smith missed last season after giving birth to a son last spring.

Dallas Wings President and CEO Greg Bibb told the AP on Monday that the team has given their four-time All-Star a core designation. That means the franchise still controls her rights for the upcoming season and can potentially sign and trade her instead of losing her as an unrestricted free agent.

"It gives us a lot of options," Bibb said in a phone call. "We could negotiate a multiyear agreement to stay in Dallas, work with her on a sign-and-trade agreement to send her to another team. Or we could execute the one-year core designation and she'd remain with us. If none of that gets done, we would have

the opportunity to trade her on the 16th day of next season."

Bibb said he believes that both sides would rather work out an agreement to find Diggins-Smith a new team.

It's the second consecutive year that the Wings could potentially lose one of their marquee players. Liz Cambage was traded before last season to Las Vegas. "Every situation is different, including this one and Liz," Bibb said. "Like Liz landing in a place she felt comfortable going, we hope to exit this process with both sides satisfied. That would include Skylar playing in a city where she wanted to play and us getting a return of equitable assets for her playing rights."

Diggins-Smith has been the face of the franchise since she was drafted third in 2013 when the team was still in Tulsa. She's averaged 15.9 points and 4.9 assists in her career. She won the league's most improved player award in 2014 and guided the Wings to the playoffs in 2017 and 2018.

"Skylar has been the face of the organization and most prominent player on the roster," Bibb said. "We do have a number of players who, if Skylar does in fact leave the organization, can ascend into that higher role with the team." Dallas has the No. 2 pick in this year's draft as well as the ninth selection. Arike Ogunbowale was the runner-up for league's rookie of the year. □



Canoeist Laurence Vincent Lapointe, left, and her lawyer Adam Klevinas attend a news conference in Montreal, Monday, Jan. 27, 2020.

Associated Press

Athlete wins doping case citing bodily fluids from boyfriend

LAUSANNE, Switzerland (AP) —

A world champion canoeist won a doping case on Monday after persuading a tribunal that her positive test was caused by bodily fluid contamination from her boyfriend.

The International Canoe Federation ended its investigation into 11-time world champion Laurence Vincent Lapointe, who tested positive for a steroid-like substance in July. She faced a four-year ban and could have missed her event's Olympic debut at the 2020 Tokyo Games.

The Canadian canoe sprint racer and her lawyer detailed in a news program that laboratory analysis of hair from her then-boyfriend showed he was likely responsible for a tiny presence of ligandrol in her doping sample.

"It's pretty incredible," Vincent Lapointe's lawyer, Adam Klevinas, said at a news conference on Monday in Trois-Rivieres, Quebec. "It took months to get results, and then at the end, we got the idea to analyze the hair of her ex and to test a product he finally admitted to taking."

The key evidence came back from a laboratory ahead of the tribunal hearing in December called by the governing body of canoeing in Switzerland.

"The ICF has accepted Ms. Vincent Lapointe's evi-

dence which supports that she was the victim of third-party contamination," the governing body said in a statement, clearing her to return to competition.

The legal debate is similar to tennis player Richard Gasquet's 2009 acquittal in the "cocaine kiss" case. The Court of Arbitration for Sport accepted Gasquet's defense that kissing a woman who had taken cocaine in a Miami nightclub, after he had withdrawn injured from a tournament, caused his positive test.

The 27-year-old Vincent Lapointe was provisionally suspended for almost six months and missed the 2019 world championships, which was a key qualifying event for the Tokyo Olympics.

"You can't even imagine how relieved I am," Vincent Lapointe said at the news conference. "It feels good to put an end to this journey and just be able to concentrate on what I love, and get back on the water to prepare for the (Olympics)."

Vincent Lapointe can still qualify for the Olympic debut of women's canoe sprint events, with May options at races in Brazil and Germany.

Monday's ruling can be challenged at CAS by the World Anti-Doping Agency if it is not satisfied with the full ruling. □



In this Sept. 28, 2019, file photo Brad Keselowski puts on his helmet during practice for Sunday's NASCAR Cup Series auto race at Charlotte Motor Speedway in Concord, N.C.

Associated Press

Penske drivers ready to perform after huge offseason shakeup

By JENNA FRYER
AP Auto Racing Writer

CONCORD, N.C. (AP) —

Team Penske won the championship last year in every series it competes except NASCAR. Doesn't mean it was a bad year: the team still won six races and placed all three of its drivers into the playoffs.

It just wasn't good enough, not when Roger Penske's IndyCar, sports car and V8 SuperCar teams won titles. So he made a sweeping offseason change by swapping the crew chiefs for Ryan Blaney, Brad Keselowski and Joey Logano — a massive personal upheaval for each driver.

"We just felt you can't have the same guy running your business forever, it gets time to change it," Penske told The Associated Press. "For me, it was the perfect time and when we got into the discussions with them, all the guys we're like, 'Let's try it.'"

"But it isn't like we took an A and gave him a B with any of the guys. All of them can win."

The move was jarring considering Logano had won the 2018 championship with Todd Gordon. Paul Wolfe had also made Keselowski the winningest driver in Penske history; the duo gave "The Captain" his first

Cup Series title in 2012.

But Wolfe will now be paired with Logano, Gordon goes to Blaney and Keselowski gets Jeremy Bullins from Blaney.

Keselowski won a team-high three races last season but had a considerable dropoff in the playoffs and his early elimination led to an eighth-place finish in the standings.

He called the personnel changes "brave and courageous" and said the goal is to put four cars — Penske has an alliance with The Wood Brothers and driver Matt DiBenedetto — in the final four. The Ford team was shut out of last season's title deciding race, which Kyle Busch won by beating two of his Toyota teammates at Joe Gibbs Racing and Kevin Harvick in a Ford. "I personally needed to be challenged and so I think it's a good challenge for me," Keselowski said. "A lot of us were pretty comfortable and this certainly removes any feeling of comfort. So if it's the kick in the (butt) I need to be the best I can be, then so be it."

The moves come ahead of contract years for both Blaney and Keselowski.

Keselowski is entering his 11th season with the team and 29 of his 30 Cup wins have come with Penske.

Blaney has been in the Penske system since 2013 but has just three Cup victories, which he admits is not good enough.

"I haven't won as many races as these guys have over the years; I don't want to be the bottom of the totem pole," Blaney said. "Joey and Brad are great, they are both champions. I want to be better than those guys. I need to get better."

"That's something I've wanted to change really bad. I think we could have it done it without the change, but this will hopefully pick things up. You never want to be the last guy. That can put your job in your jeopardy." Penske insisted his drivers' jobs aren't on the line. But Blaney and Keselowski are in contract years and a failure to deliver could be costly in negotiations.

"There's nothing sinister here, it was just time for change," Penske said. "All three drivers see opportunities. We are moving people all the time, I think you have to, but all three guys are performing. We're not as good as Gibbs, for sure, we've got to be better."

Joe Gibbs Racing won 19 of 36 Cup races last year, took three of the four spots in the championship finale and won the title. □

London police to use face scan tech, stoking privacy fears

By **KELVIN CHAN**
AP Business Writer

LONDON (AP) — London police will start using facial recognition cameras to pick out suspects from street crowds in real time, in a major advance for the controversial technology that raises worries about automated surveillance and erosion of privacy rights.

The Metropolitan Police Service said Friday that after a series of trials, the cameras will be put to work within a month in operational deployments of around 5-6



In this file photo dated Wednesday, March 28, 2012, a security CCTV camera is seen by the Olympic Stadium at the Olympic Park in London.

Associated Press

"Facial recognition technology poses a huge threat to human rights, including the rights to privacy, non-discrimination, freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly," Baccarelli said.

London police said the facial recognition system, which runs on technology from Japan's NEC, looks for faces in crowds to see if they match any on "watch-lists" of up to 2,500 people wanted for serious and violent offences, including gun and knife crimes and child sexual exploitation.

"As a modern police force, I believe that we have a duty to use new technologies to keep people safe in London," Assistant Commissioner Nick Ephgrave said in a statement.

The British have long become accustomed to video surveillance, with cameras used in public spaces for decades by security forces fighting terror threats. Real-time monitoring will put that tolerance to the test.

London is the sixth most monitored city in the world, with nearly 628,000 surveillance cameras, according to a report by Comparitech.

London's move comes after a British High Court ruling last year cleared a similar deployment by South Wales police, which has been using it since 2017 to monitor big events like soccer games, royal visits and airshows. That system deleted people's biometric data automatically after scanning.

Britain's privacy commissioner, Elizabeth Denham, who had warned police not to take that ruling as a blanket approval, struck a cautious tone on Friday.

She said that while London police have stated they're putting safeguards and transparency in place to protect privacy and human rights, "it is difficult to comment further on this until we have an actual deployment and we are able to scrutinize the details of that deployment." □

hours at potential crime hotspots. The locations would be chosen based on intelligence but the police did not say where, the number of places, or how many cameras would be deployed.

Real-time crowd surveillance by British police is among the more aggressive uses of facial recognition in wealthy democracies and raises questions about how the technol-

ogy will enter people's daily lives. Authorities and private companies are eager to use facial recognition but rights groups say it threatens civil liberties and represents an expansion of surveillance.

London's decision to use the technology defies warnings from rights groups, lawmakers and independent experts, Amnesty International researcher Anna Baccarelli said.

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This Sept. 6, 2012, file photo shows the Amazon logo in Santa Monica, Calif.

Associated Press

By **BARBARA ORTUTAY**
AP Technology Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Hundreds of employees are openly criticizing Amazon's record on climate change despite what they say is a company policy that puts their jobs at risk for speaking out.

On Sunday, more than 300 employees of the online retail giant signed their names and job titles to statements on blog post on Medium. The online protest was organized by a group

called Amazon Employees For Climate Justice, an advocacy group founded by Amazon workers that earlier this month said the company had sent letters to its members threatening to fire them if they continued to speak to the press.

"It's our moral responsibility to speak up, and the changes to the communications policy are censoring us from exercising that responsibility," said Sarah Tracy, a software development engineer at Amazon,

Workers criticize Amazon on climate despite risk to jobs

in a statement. Amazon said that its policy on external communications is not new and is in keeping with other large companies. It said the policy applies to all Amazon employees and is not directed at any specific group.

"While all employees are welcome to engage constructively with any of the many teams inside Amazon that work on sustainability and other topics, we do enforce our external communications policy and will not allow employees to publicly disparage or misrepresent the company or the hard work of their colleagues who are developing solutions to these hard problems," according to an Amazon spokesperson.

Amazon, which relies on fossil fuels to power the planes, trucks and vans that ship packages all over the world, has an enormous carbon footprint. And its workers have been vocal in criticizing some of the company's practices.

Last year, more than 8,000 staffers signed an open letter to CEO and founder Jeff Bezos demanding that Amazon cut its carbon emissions, end its use of fossil fuels and stop its work with oil companies that use Amazon's technology to locate fossil fuel deposits.

Amazon said in a statement that it is passionate about climate change issues and has already pledged to become net zero carbon by 2040 and use 100% renewable energy by 2030. □

GM to invest \$2.2B in Detroit to build electric vehicles

DETROIT (AP) — General Motors is spending \$2.2 billion to refurbish an underused Detroit factory so it can build a series of electric and self-driving vehicles, eventually employing 2,200 people.

GM said in a statement Monday that the factory will start building the company's first electric pickup late in 2021, followed by a funky-looking self-driving shuttle for GM's Cruise autonomous vehicle unit.

The truck will be the first of several electric vehicles to be built at the plant, which straddles the border between Detroit and the enclave of Hamtramck. The company has plans to revive the Hummer nameplate for one of the vehicles.

In November of 2018 GM announced plans to close the factory along with three others in the U.S. But the company promised to reopen Detroit-Hamtramck to build electric vehicles during last fall's contentious contract negotiations with the United Auto Workers union.

At that time the plant employed about 1,500 hourly and salaried workers. Currently the plant is working on one shift with about 900 workers making the Cadillac CT6 and Chevrolet Impala sedans.

The factory will be shut down at the end of February, when renovations are expected to begin. The general assembly area as well as the paint and body shops will get major upgrades including new machinery, conveyors and controls, GM said in a statement.

GM will also invest \$800 million in equipment for parts suppliers and other projects related to the new electric trucks.

The factory will be GM's first assembly plant to be fully dedicated to building electric vehicles.

"Through this investment, GM is taking a big step forward in making our vision of an all-electric future a reality," GM President Mark Reuss said in a statement. He was to announce the plans Monday at the plant with Michigan Gov. Gretchen



Mark Reuss, President, General Motors speaks at the GM Detroit-Hamtramck Assembly plant in Hamtramck, Mich., Monday, Jan. 27, 2020.

Associated Press

Whitmer.

The announcement came days after Michigan's economic-development arm, the Michigan Strategic Fund, agreed to revise tax breaks for GM in exchange for the company's commitment to invest at least \$3.5 billion more over 10 years in the state, including to build electric vehicles at Detroit-Hamtramck.

The value of the automaker's maximum state

tax credit was cut by \$325 million, to nearly \$2.3 billion through 2029. GM still has to retain at least 34,750 jobs in Michigan — it has about 45,000 now — but got flexibility to count more jobs at its headquarters in Detroit and its research, development and engineering campus in the suburb of Warren.

The plant now employs about 800 people. Production of the Chevrolet Im-

pala will cease at the end of February, at which point renovations will begin to produce electric pickups and other vehicles. The plant will have 2,000 employees once it is at full capacity.

GM CEO Mary Barra has promised an "all-electric future," with the company restructuring to raise cash in part to develop 20 electric models that it plans to sell worldwide by 2023. □

Watchdog: China is 2nd largest arms producer behind the U.S.

COPENHAGEN, Denmark (AP) — China is the second-largest arms producer in the world behind the United States but ahead of Russia, a Swedish arms watchdog said Monday.

The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, or SIPRI, said the research is the most comprehensive picture of Chinese companies' weapons production to date. In its annual report, SIPRI said it had "identified information from 2015-17 on the value of arms sales by major Chinese arms companies," and looked at four companies that cover three sectors of conventional arms production: aerospace, electronics and land systems, "for which credible financial information is available." In

the past, a lack of transparency has meant that the value of Chinese companies' arms sales has been either unknown or difficult to reliably estimate, SIPRI said to explain why the Chinese arms companies previously were not included in its annual ranking of the world's 100 largest arms-producing and military services companies. SIPRI added that with the increase of available data on these companies, it is now possible to develop reasonably reliable estimates of the scale of the Chinese arms industry and the four major Chinese arms companies chosen for the study "can now finally be compared with the major arms companies from the rest of the world." □

OPEN HOUSE

Date: Wednesday, 29 January 2020
Time: 10 AM till 12 PM

Location: Rooi Santo Villa Park, on the Road in front of Wacamaya Apartments



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Mutts



6 Chix

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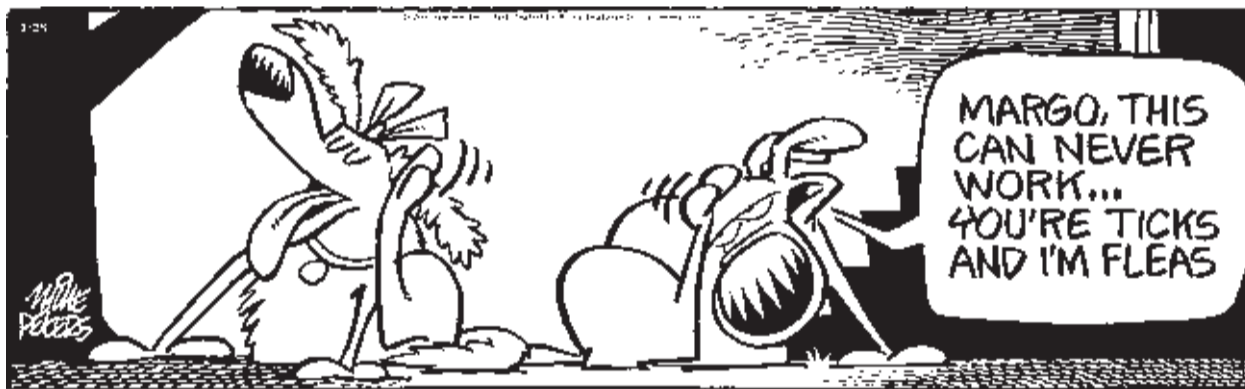
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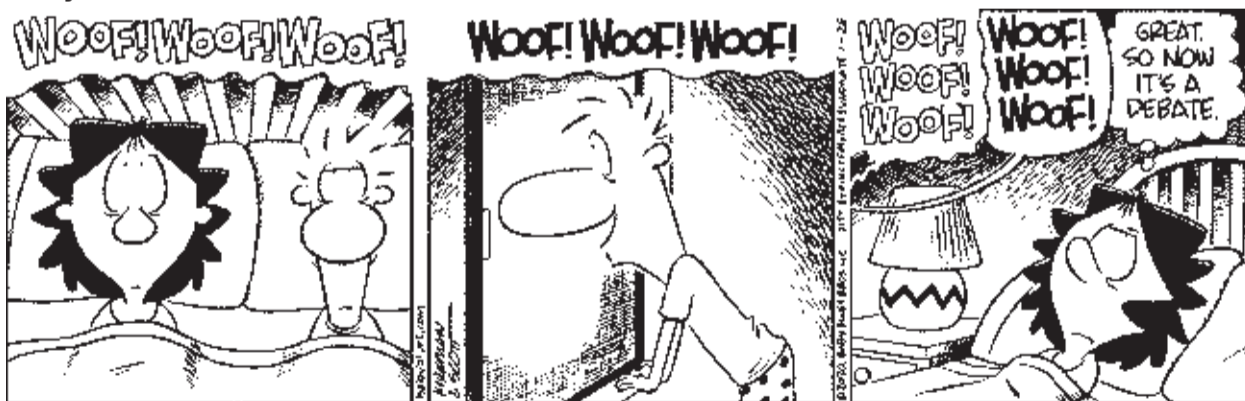
Blondie



Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

		5			9	3		
	2				5	4	9	
9				1			6	5
		6		7		8	3	
4	1			5				
6	7			4				1
	4	3	9				7	
		8	7			2		

Difficulty Level ★★

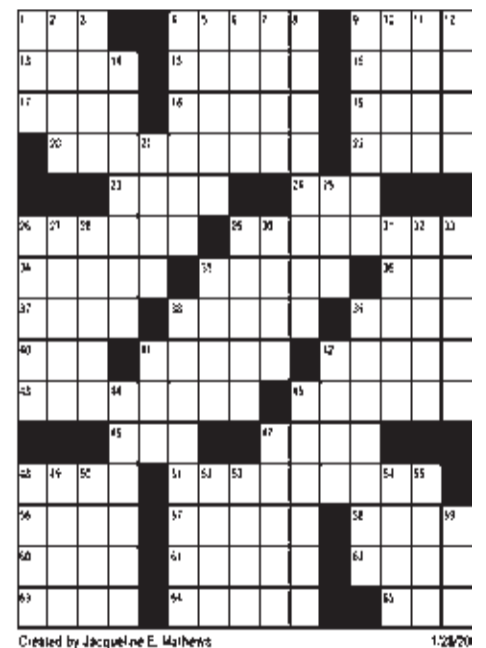
Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

1	3	7	8	9	6	5	4	2
8	4	2	3	5	7	1	6	9
5	9	6	1	2	4	8	7	3
7	8	9	5	3	1	6	2	4
2	6	5	4	7	8	3	9	1
4	1	3	2	6	9	7	8	5
6	5	4	9	8	3	2	1	7
9	2	8	7	1	5	4	3	6
3	7	1	6	4	2	9	5	8

ACROSS

- 1 Diego, CA
- 4 More competent
- 8 Car game
- 13 Apples frosting
- 15 Hidden treasure
- 16 Bar mitzvah dance
- 17 Yelash wood
- 18 Musical sounds
- 19 New Testament book for short
- 20 One who writes plays
- 22 Punctuation mark
- 23 Georgia city in Atlanta
- 24 James Curtis
- 26 Wild shrl cry
- 29 De gntful
- 34 Your Wagon: Broadway musical
- 35 Seashore
- 36 Depart this life
- 37 Play'sy's place
- 38 Daybreaks
- 39 i've Walking on the Railroad
- 40 Now or Never
- 41 Cone-shaped abode
- 42 Harmony
- 43 One nearing adulthood
- 45 Treen Jansis
- 46 Father Who art in heaven ...
- 47 Orange peel
- 48 Bu l. Sp.
- 51 Ev'ta setting
- 56 Passionate
- 57 Keaton or Ladd
- 58 Stem assents
- 60 Socke anemia
- 61 Part of Poe's name
- 62 State
- 63 Patel's place
- 64 Good buys
- 65 Chop down



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathers

1/28/20

Monday's Puzzle Solved

MOB	ADEAL	SCDT
WAVE	DIXIE	HAVE
EYED	OVERWORKED	
EAR	PRESS	PIERS
	POUND	GEL
SCAMPS	MERLIN	
OASIS	LLAMA	NOW
LIST	READS	DESI
ONE	RANGE	SAVES
ESSAYS	LAVISH	
	MIS	VALET
EBSEN	STATE	ABC
BELLY	LAUGH	ABLE
BAIL	ARGUE	CLUE
SUMS	WISER	TEE

DOWN

- 1 Take a load off
- 2 ... got a no e n one
- 3 ... ss cose cat
- 4 Physical assault
- 5 Thin soup
- 6 Anderson of WRRP in Cincinnati
- 7 12/24 & 12/31
- 8 Fiogely
- 9 Window coverings
- 10 Comic actress mogerie
- 11 Camey's namesakes
- 12 Loreta Smit sitcom
- 14 Rink activity
- 21 TV's the Press
- 25 Po'sh of
- 26 Banana ice cream treat
- 27 Terre IN
- 28 Dishwasher cycle
- 29 Might
- 30 Wa sway
- 31 Just night
- 32 Ferrale relative
- 33 Timney & Hadiman
- 35 ol Good Hope

- 49 mms
- 50 potho ders
- 51 Anger
- 52 away ga'op
- 53 off
- 54 Very exched
- 55 Ark ouider
- 56 S'racing tool
- 59 S'zen

Classifieds

Aruba Divi Phoenix
3 BR Penhouse 671
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at 587 900 room 4564

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Week 2/1113 (\$16k);
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5&6/1521 (\$20k/Wk.);
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Week 8/1113; 8/1409
(\$17k/Wk.);
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and appliances
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Halley Time Travel

For Rent
Marriott Ocean Club
1 BR Ocean View Platinum
Price : \$2.8 K each
Date : 03/22 to 03/29/2020
Date : 03/20 to 03/27/2020
Date : 02/21 to 02/27/2020
Date : 01/17 to 02/22/2021
Marriott Surf Club
2 BR Ocean Side Platinum
Date : 03/6 to 03/13/ 2020
\$4 K
Divi Links Golf
Studio wk 7 \$1,5 K
sleep 4 date ;02/15 to 02/22/
2020

For Sale
Marriott Ocean Club
Platinum
1 BR Ocean View \$ 10 K
1 BR Ocean Front \$20 K
2 BR Ocean View \$17 K
2 BR Ocean Front \$26 K
Marriott Surf Club
Platinum
2 BR Ocean View \$ 17 K
2 BR Ocean Side \$ 18 K
2 BR Ocean Front \$ 26 K
3 BR Ocean View \$ 26 K

Aruba Divi Phoenix
1 BR WK 2
building 8 Ground floor
32 weeks remain \$17 K
1 BR WK 8 \$15 K
building 6 on the 4th floor
27 weeks remain
Aruba Divi Phoenix
1 BR PH WK 8/9 \$20 K both
14th floor 32/22 weeks remain
1 BR WK 11
building 7 on the 3th floor
33 weeks remain \$15 K
Divi Links Golf
1 BR wk 1/2/3
Birdie 2 on the 3rd floor
25 weeks remain on each
All 3 weeks together 30 K each

Divi Links Golf
Studio WK 2 \$7.5 K
eagle 3 with 32 weeks remain
1 BR WK 3 \$8.5 K
eagle 3 with 23 weeks remain
Studio wk 5 ,7 and 8 \$8 K each
Birdie 4 with 28/27/29 weeks
remain
Divi Links Golf
2 BR WK 3 \$ 20 K
Eagle 8 with 25 weeks remain
2 BR wk 3 Lock out \$20 K
Birdie 9 26 weeks remain

Divi Links Golf \$8 K
1 Br Wk 4 Birdie 1
19 weeks remain
1 BR WK 6 Birdie 1 \$8 K

Dutch Village
1 BR wk 7/8 \$9 K each
15 weeks remain each
2 BR wk 7 \$18 K each
25 weeks remain
Studio WK 1 \$7.5 K
Ground Floor 33 weeks remain
Divi Village
1 BR WK 1 \$8.5 K
Studio wk 1 \$7.5 K
building D & F 25 weeks remain
each

Divi Links Golf
Studio wk 1 \$7.5 K
building 4 with 28 weeks remain
Paradise Beach Villas
1 BR WK 1 & 2 \$20 K both
weeks
2sd floor poo/ocean view
Divi Links Golf
1 BR wk 8 & 9 \$9.5 K each
eagle 9 with 27/19 weeks
remain

Renaissance Suites
1 BR WK # 9 \$ 8 K
4 rd floor overlook
Harbor Ocean View
1 BR WK # 11 \$9 K
3rd floor pool/ocean
Eagle Resorts
1 BR WK 2 \$8 K
1 BR WK 5,6,7,8
Ground floor \$8 K each
1 BR WK 7/8/9 \$8 K each

Caribbean Palm Village
1 BR WK 2 6 K
1 BR /2 BR wk 3 \$ 7 K
1 BR WK 3/4 \$6 K each
2 BR WK 5/6 \$7 K each

Dutch Village
1 BR wk 9 \$9K
16 weeks remain
1 BR Wk 8 \$8K
12 weeks remain
1 BR wk 7/8 \$7K/9K
12/24 weeks remain

Eagle Resort
1 BR wk 2
1 BR wk 3 and 4 same room
\$ 7000 each

212300

Divi Village
Studio wk 6 \$ 7.5 K
building F with 21 weeks remain
2 sd floor 18 weeks remain

Eagle Resort
1 BR week 1,2 ,3,4
ground floor same room
1 BR WK 5,6 ground floor \$6500
each

Paradise Beach Villas \$4K
studio wk 50 3rd floor pool/
ocean
2 BR WK 51 /52 on 3 rd floor
\$16K each

212406

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IMSAN 24 Hours
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San Nicolas:
San Nicolas Tel. 584 5712

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Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002
Urgent Care 586 0448
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Police	100
Oranjestad	527 3140
Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
Ambulancia	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

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Taxi Tas	587 5900
Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

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American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

CRUISES



January 28
Norwegian Epic / Explorer
January 29
Mein Schiff 2
Eurodam

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AP Explains: How climate change feeds Africa locust invasion

By **CARA ANNA**
Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — Locusts by the millions are nibbling their way across a large part of Africa in the worst outbreak some places have seen in 70 years. Is this another effect of a changing climate? Yes, researchers say.

An unprecedented food security crisis may be the result.

The locusts "reproduce rapidly and, if left unchecked, their current numbers could grow 500 times by June," the United Nations says.

Here's a look at what's going on and where the voracious insects might be going next.

A LOCUST OUTBREAK? WHAT'S THAT LIKE?

The swarms of desert locusts hang like shimmering dark clouds on the horizon as they scour the countryside in what are already some of the world's most vulnerable countries, including Somalia. Roughly the length of a finger, the whirring insects in huge numbers have destroyed hundreds of square kilometers (miles) of vegetation and forced people in some areas to bodily wade through them. "A typical desert locust swarm can contain up to 150 million locusts per square kilometer," the East African regional body, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, has said. "Swarms migrate with the wind and can cover 100 to 150 kilometers (62 to 93 miles) in a day. An average swarm can destroy as much food crops in a day as is sufficient to feed 2,500 people."

Alarm and exasperation mix with curiosity as people try to shoo the locusts away by shouting, waving pieces of clothing or bang-



In this photo taken Tuesday, Nov. 5, 2019, a swarm of desert locusts covers the ground in Chidhi village, in the Awdal region of Somalia's semi-autonomous region of Somaliland.

Associated Press

ing on sheets of corrugated metal. In rural Kenya, men dashed along a path waving leafy branches at the insects and laughing in astonishment.

"These things here, they came to us from Ethiopia and are destroying everything along the way including our farm," said Esther Ndanu in the Kenyan village of Ngomeni. "We want the government to move very quickly to bring the plane to spray them with the medicine that can kill them, otherwise they will destroy everything."

"I am seeing a catastrophe," local official Johnson Mutua Kanandu said.

WHERE IS THIS HAPPENING?

An "extremely dangerous increase" in locust swarm activity has been reported

in Kenya, East Africa's economic hub, regional authorities reported last week. One swarm measured 60 kilometers (37 miles) long by 40 kilometers (25 miles) wide in the country's northeast, IGAD said.

Kenya hasn't seen a locust outbreak like this in 70 years, Rosanne Marchesich, emergency response leader with the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization, said Wednesday.

"It's the worst that we've seen in Ethiopia and in Somalia in 25 years," she added, noting extensive damage to crops. Millions of people in both countries already cope with the constant risk of drought or flooding, as well as deadly unrest in Ethiopia and extremist attacks in Somalia. Now South Sudan, struggling to emerge from a civil

war, and Uganda are bracing for the locusts' arrival.

"Uganda has not had to deal with a locust infestation since the '60s so there is concern about the ability for experts on the ground to be able to deal with it without external support," Marchesich said. "And in a country like South Sudan, already 47% of the population is food insecure."

This week Uganda's prime minister told agriculture authorities that "this is an emergency and all agencies must be on the alert," the government-controlled New Vision newspaper reported.

HOW IS CLIMATE CHANGE INVOLVED?

Heavy rains in East Africa made 2019 one of the region's wettest years on record, said Nairobi-based climate scientist Abubakr

Salih Babiker. He blamed rapidly warming waters in the Indian Ocean off Africa's eastern coast, which also spawned an unusual number of strong tropical cyclones off Africa last year.

Heavy rainfall and warmer temperatures are favorable conditions for locust breeding and in this case the conditions have become "exceptional," he said.

Even now rainfall continues in some parts of the vast region. The greenery that springs up keeps the locusts fuelled.

"Countries are trying to prepare but this took them by surprise," Babiker said.

The further increase in locust swarms could last until June as favorable breeding conditions continue, IGAD has said. But Babiker said it is hard to say for sure when this outbreak will be over.

"This has become psychologically pressurizing," he said, delicately.

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

Major locust outbreaks can be devastating. One between 2003 and 2005 cost more than \$500 million to control across 20 countries in northern Africa, the FAO has said. It caused more than \$2.5 billion in harvest losses.

To help prevent and control outbreaks, authorities analyze satellite images, stockpile pesticides and conduct aerial spraying. In Ethiopia, officials have said they deployed four small planes to help fight the invasion.

The U.N. on Wednesday allocated \$10 million for aerial spraying, with humanitarian chief Mark Lowcock saying families across the region "now face the prospect of watching as their crops are destroyed before their eyes." □

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This cover image released by Trimeter Records shows "The Family Songbook" by The Haden Triplets.

Associated Press

Review: Haden Triplets sustain tradition of sibling harmony

By PABLO GORONDI
Associated Press

On their new album, "The Family Songbook," The Haden Triplets sustain the longstanding musical tradition of siblings singing in harmony while also expanding their family's musical footprint, which goes back generations.

On the second album they've recorded as a group, Petra, Rachel and Tanya Haden, daughters of legendary jazz bassist Charlie Haden, interpret a wide range of songs.

The selections include not just American folk standards like "Wayfaring Stranger" and "Flee As A Bird," but a heartbreaker from Kanye West, "Say You Will," and even a composition from their brother, Josh. Also aboard are four pre-

viously unpublished songs from their grandfather, Carl E. Haden.

They may have been sung on the the Haden Family radio show in Missouri in the 1930s, where Dad Charlie got his start as a yodeling toddler, but were not recorded. Their recovery is a real treat.

The four dusted-off works include "Memories of Will Rogers," an homage to the actor and humorist who died in a 1935 Alaska airplane crash, and the lovely but fatalistic "Who Will You Love."

The sisters' natural empathy really shines through across the album, produced by Woody Jackson, and the songs from their grandfather are a shining addition to the family treasure chest. □



DJ Khaled poses in the press room with the award for best rap/sung performance for "Higher" at the 62nd annual Grammy Awards at the Staples Center on Sunday, Jan. 26, 2020, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

Music mainstays and newcomers speak out on Grammy inclusion

By LEANNE ITALIE
AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Drama over fairness and inclusion at the Grammy Awards carried over to music's big night Sunday as newcomers and mainstays in the industry supported Sean "Diddy" Combs and his powerful speech putting the Recording Academy on a clock to fix the nomination process when it comes to rap and R&B in major categories.

"I think if they smart, they listen to Diddy," soulful singer Lucky Daye told The Associated Press on the red carpet.

British rapper Labrinth added: "Hopefully there's a conversation to really think about what's happened."

Days ago, the academy's just-ousted CEO Deborah Dugan claimed that the

awards are rigged and filled with conflicts of interest. At the Clive Davis gala Saturday night, Combs — who was honored — spoke for 50 fiery minutes, saying in part:

"So I say this with love to the Grammys, because you really need to know this, every year y'all be killing us man. Man, I'm talking about the pain. I'm speaking for all these artists here, the producers, the executives.

The amount of time it takes to make these records, to pour your heart into it, and you just want an even playing field."

Combs urged in his speech that substantive change should come within 365 days.

Legend Smokey Robinson had words of support for Combs, his friend, but he

said he wasn't surprised about the Grammy criticism.

"Diddy could actually be a politician. I thought this speech was powerful. It touched on a lot of things people were afraid to say," he said.

Of Dugan calling out manipulation of the nomination process, he said, "It's not like it's news. We've known it all along. It's just coming to the forefront. All that is hidden will come to light."

Tyler, The Creator said backstage after his "Igor" won best rap album that he's "half and half" on the controversy over whether Grammy voting is fair.

"On one side, I'm very grateful that what I made could just be acknowledged in a world like this," he told reporters. □



Lin-Manuel Miranda, left, and Luis Miranda attend the premiere of "Siempre, Luis" at the Temple Theatre during the 2020 Sundance Film Festival on Saturday, Jan. 25, 2020, in Park City, Utah. Associated Press

At Sundance, Lin-Manuel Miranda shares the spotlight

By **JAKE COYLE**
AP Film Writer

PARK CITY, Utah (AP) — Lin-Manuel Miranda knows that, for some, the story of his life is already written.

"If I can put it absolutely morbidly, I know that 'Hamilton' is the first line in my obituary," Miranda says with an unusually chipper tone for someone contemplating their death. "Like, good! Done! I know nothing will ever be 'Hamilton' again and I'm fine with that. I think artists start to go off the rails when they try to chase that again and again."

A pair of new documentaries premiering at the Sundance Film Festival this week capture a wider view of Miranda's life through some of the people who have been most foundational to him. "Siempre, Luis" is a profile of his father, the tireless Puerto Rico advocate Luis Miranda. "We Are Freestyle Love Supreme" documents the improvised hip-hop show that Miranda and several of his "Hamilton" collaborators regularly put on before "In the Heights" altered Miranda's trajectory, and which they recently reformed on Broadway.

"Life's not a linear narrative. It's not this and this and this ascent. It's all these side journeys," Miranda says in "We Are Freestyle Love Supreme." "Life gets complicated and you keep going. There's no end point. What's that Orson Wells' quote? If you want to tell a story with a happy ending, it depends on where you end the story."

Both films are, in a way, origin stories for the 40-year-old Miranda. But they are also stories that take some of the megawatt spotlight trust on him by "Hamilton" and deflects it onto those around him.

"My son is the most collaborative human being that I know," says the elder Miranda.

"From sharing the Kennedy Center award with his other collaborators to making

sure that everyone who did something important to him and accomplish that next goal gets accounted for and acknowledged. I understand why. I have a wonderful wife of 42 years who is exactly like that. It's part of his DNA."

"Siempre, Luis," directed by John James, is a profile of Luis Miranda, the longtime New York political player. It took some time for Luis to get accustomed to the cameras being focused on him.

"I've spent all my life promoting a cause, an organization, elected officials, Lin-Manuel Miranda. So to all of a sudden be promoting myself is not a role I've had all my life. I was always pushing something, never being the center of attention. But I'll tell you, though, it feels good! It's like a narcissist's dream."

The film also depicts when son and father a year ago mounted "Hamilton" in Puerto Rico. For Lin-Manuel, Alexander Hamilton reminded him of his father, both immigrants who settled in New York.

"Anyone who's seen 'Hamilton' and wonders 'How much is this like its author' will see my dad and go, 'Oh, I get it now. He's playing his dad,'" says Lin-Manuel. "I saw in the sheer tonnage of what Hamilton accomplished in his lifetime — he pushed through the Federalist Papers while also running a law practice — and it reminded me of my father. When I'm playing Hamilton, I'm playing my dad."

Sometimes, Luis reminds his son almost too much of the fiery founding father. "I've had moments with him where he's about to very curtly respond to an email and I go, 'Dad, don't go Hamilton on them,'" says Lin-Manuel.

Andrew Fried's "We Are Freestyle Love Supreme" traces the roots of many of the primary forces involved in "Hamilton," including director Thomas Kail and actor Christopher Jackson,

who originated the role of George Washington. But some of those who were part of "Freestyle Love Supreme," for various reasons, didn't come along on the "Hamilton" journey. Utkarsh Ambudkar was then at a low point, dealing with drug addiction.

"Some people were on this rocket ship and some weren't," says Lin-Manuel. "It's lovely to be on the other side of it because I think we're closer for it."

As seen in the film, the members "Freestyle Love Supreme" reunited for a successful Broadway run of the show they used to perform in the basement of New York's Drama Bookshop.

"It's been our go-to. It's been a part of all our lives," says Lin-Manuel. "For me, creatively it's the muscle groups that make everything I like stronger. You can't indulge in writer's block if you're also getting on stage and creating a 90-minute musical with your friends."

Miranda, who also appears in another Sundance documentary ("Mucho Mucho Amor," about famed Puerto Rican psychic Walter Mercado), will this summer see the big-screen adaptation of "In the Heights" in movie theaters. And he still presides over the vast empire of "Hamilton." Rather than devote himself to trying to write another mammoth musical, he has largely followed his passions. Among them: composing the music for Disney's live-action remake of "The Little Mermaid" with Alan Menken.

"I only say yes to things that I would learn from and that I would kick myself forever if I didn't say yes to," says Miranda. "If you're going to ask me if I want to write with Alan Menken on my favorite movie from my childhood, I'm going to say yes to that."

You can look at the stuff from 'Hamilton' as burdensome or freeing, and I try to choose freeing." □

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PBP MON-FRI 3:50 | 6:15 | 9:10

SAT-SUN 3:20 | 6:15 | 9:10

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WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES

MON-THU 6:15 | 8:30

FRI 6:15 | 8:30 | 10:15

SAT 1:50 | 4:00 | 6:15 | 8:30 | 10:15

SUN 1:50 | 4:00 | 6:15 | 8:30

PH

PBP MON-THU 5:00 | 7:15 | 9:30

FRI 5:00 | 7:15 | 9:30 | 11:40

SAT 2:45 | 5:00 | 7:15 | 9:30 | 11:40

SUN 2:45 | 5:00 | 7:15 | 9:30

VIP

ROBERT DOWNEY JR. | ANTONIO BANDERAS

DOLITTLE

WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES

MON-THU 5:50 | 8:15

FRI 5:50 | 8:15 | 10:40

SAT 3:25 | 5:50 | 8:15 | 10:40

SUN 3:25 | 5:50 | 8:15

PH

PBP MON-THU 4:20 | 6:40 | 9:00

FRI 4:20 | 6:40 | 9:00 | 11:20

SAT 2:00 | 4:20 | 6:40 | 9:00 | 11:20

SUN 2:00 | 4:20 | 6:40 | 9:00

SPANISH

PBP MON-FRI 5:05

SAT-SUN 2:45 | 5:05

WILL SMITH | MARTIN LAWRENCE

BAD BOYS FOR LIFE

WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES

MON-THU 7:50

FRI 7:50 | 10:30

SAT 2:20 | 5:05 | 7:50 | 10:30

SUN 2:20 | 5:05 | 7:50

PH

VIP MON-FRI 5:50 | 8:35

SAT-SUN 3:05 | 5:50 | 8:35

PBP

CXC

MON-THU 5:10 | 7:30

FRI 5:10 | 7:30 | 10:00

SAT 2:50 | 5:10 | 7:30 | 10:00

SUN 2:50 | 5:10 | 7:30

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VIP MON-FRI 4:00 | 6:40 | 9:20

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UNDERWATER

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MON-THU 6:05 | 8:20

FRI 6:05 | 8:20 | 10:35

SAT 3:50 | 6:05 | 8:20 | 10:35

SUN 3:50 | 6:05 | 8:20 | 10:35

PH

PBP MON-THU & SUN 7:25 | 9:35

FRI-SAT 7:25 | 9:35 | 11:40

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Almodóvar, Banderas triumph with "Pain and Glory" at Goyas

MADRID (AP) — Pedro Almodóvar's "Pain and Glory" swept the top prizes at the Spanish Film Academy's Goya Awards, including best picture, best director and a best actor victory for Antonio Banderas.

"Pain and Glory" is nominated for an Academy Award in the best international film category. Almodóvar is hoping to claim his third Oscar in two weeks.

The film, which is considered the most personal for the 70-year-old Almodóvar, also won best original screenplay, best original music, best editing and a best supporting actress prize for Julieta Serrano.

"I realized that I was writing about myself and the past (and) I wasn't sure if I should continue and open myself up to such a degree, but I did, and now I am very happy," Almodóvar said at the awards gala held in Málaga on Saturday.

Banderas had been nominated on five previous occasions for a Goya but had never won other than the honorary Goya for his career in 2015.

Two films about the 1936-39 Spanish Civil War were also recognized.



Spanish film director Pedro Almodóvar poses with his trophy after winning the best film award for "Dolor y gloria" during the Goya Film Awards Ceremony in Malaga, southern Spain, early Sunday, Jan. 26, 2020.

Associated Press

Alejandro Amenábar's "While at War" won five awards, mostly in the technical categories, while the award for best actress went to Belén Cuesta for her role in "The Infinite Trench."

Benedicta Sánchez won for best new actress at age 84 for her role in "Fire Will Come," a film by Oliver Laxe made without professional actors in Spain's remote northwest.

In her acceptance speech, Sánchez reminded her grandchildren "to not forget their grandma." □



In this Dec. 19, 2014 file photo, Brazilian author Paulo Coelho appears during an interview at his apartment, in Geneva, Switzerland.

Associated Press

Coelho deletes children's book co-written with Kobe Bryant

SAO PAULO (AP) — Kobe Bryant and Brazilian writer Paulo Coelho were working together on a children's book, but the author of "The Alchemist" said he deleted the draft after Bryant's death in helicopter crash. The 72-year-old novelist told The Associated Press Monday that the two men started discussing the project in 2016, when Bryant retired after a 20-year NBA career. They began writing a few months ago.

Within hours of hearing of

Bryant's death Sunday, Coelho announced that he would delete the draft, rather than finish without the 41-year-old five-time NBA champion.

"I deleted the draft because it didn't make any sense to publish without him," Coelho said by phone on Monday from his home in Geneva. "It wouldn't add anything relevant to him or his family."

"That doesn't stop me from writing someday about things I learned from Kobe

and how much of a larger than life person he was," Coelho said. "But the children's book did not make sense anymore."

Coelho's decision disappointed many of Bryant's fans, who flooded the writer's social media channels asking for the draft not to be erased. The acclaimed writer, who has sold tens of millions of books, said the idea of the book was to inspire underprivileged children to overcome adversity through sports. □

Salma Hayek apologizes for praising controversial new novel

NEW YORK (AP) — Salma Hayek is apologizing for promoting a controversial new novel, Jeanine Cummins' "American Dirt," without actually reading it.

"American Dirt," published Tuesday, tells the story of a Mexican woman and her 8-year-old son fleeing to the U.S. border after numerous family members are murdered in drug cartel-related violence. The heavily publicized book has been praised by Stephen King and Ann Patchett among others and was

chosen by Oprah Winfrey for her book club. On Saturday, it ranked No. 4 on Amazon.com's bestseller list.

But numerous Mexican-American writers have called "American Dirt" an ill-informed narrative about Mexico that reinforces stereotypes. Cummins, a non-Mexican, even acknowledged in an author's note that she had reservations about writing the novel. She has said she wanted to personalize the issue of immigration and

be a "bridge" between different worlds.

Earlier this week, Hayek had posted a picture of herself on Instagram holding the book, and she praised Winfrey for "giving a voice to the voiceless & for loving harder in response to hate." But after facing criticism online, the Mexican-American actress pulled back Friday, writing that she was unaware of any controversy.

"I thank all of you who caught me in the act of not doing my research,



In this Jan. 7, 2020 file photo, actress Salma Hayek attends the world premiere of "Like a Boss" at the SVA Theatre in New York.

Associated Press

and for setting me straight, because that means you know me and gave me the benefit of the doubt,"

she wrote, "I apologize for shouting out something without experiencing it or doing research on it." □

'Magic' gloves let acclaimed Brazilian pianist play again

By MAURICIO SAVARESE

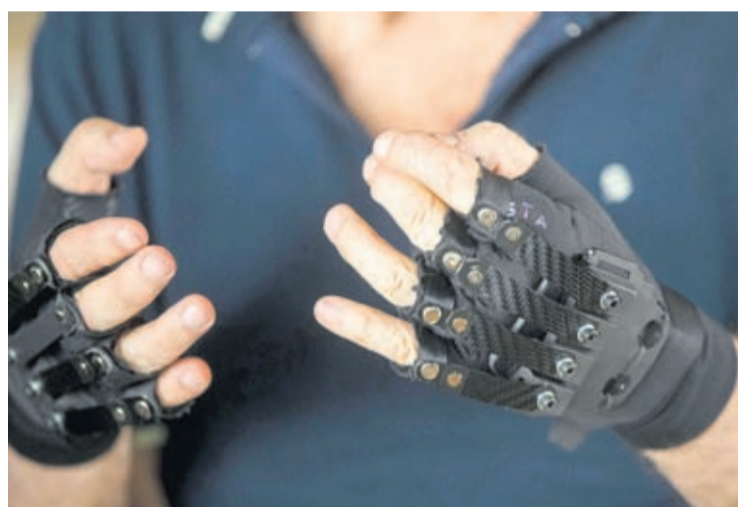
Associated Press

SAO PAULO (AP) — A few days before Christmas, renowned pianist João Carlos Martins summoned his friends to a Sao Paulo bar so he could show off the best gift he'd received in years: a new pair of bionic gloves that are letting the 79-year-old play with both hands for the first time in more than two decades. Considered one of the great interpreters of Johann Sebastian Bach's music, the Brazilian classical pianist and conductor had retired last March after 24 surgeries trying to stop pains from a degenerative disease and a series of accidents. His limitations had forced him to work mostly as a conductor since the early 2000s.

But since the closing days of 2019, friends have been returning to Martins' downtown penthouse to hear him bring Frédéric Chopin, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and his favorite Bach back to life at his Petrof piano. Before the gloves, which were especially developed for him, the pianist could only play songs slowly with his thumbs and, sometimes, his index fingers.

"After I lost my tools, my hands, and couldn't play the piano, it was if there was a corpse inside my chest," Martins told The Associated Press.

Martins' health problems date back to 1965. He famously rebounded after every setback — nerve damage in his arm inflicted during a soccer match in New York, a mugger hitting him over the head with a metal pipe while he toured in Bulgaria, and more. But even friends expected the latest surgery, on his left hand, to mark the end of his days on the piano bench. That might have been his fate, were it not for a designer who believed the pianist's retirement had come too early. Ubiratã Bizarro Costa created neoprene-covered bionic gloves that bump Martins' fingers upward after they depress the keys, and which are held together by a carbon fiber



Brazilian pianist Joao Carlos Martins poses for pictures wearing bionic gloves, at his home in Sao Paulo, Brazil, Wednesday, Jan. 22, 2020.

Associated Press

board. "I did the first models based on images of his hands, but those were far from ideal,"

Brazilian pianist Joao Carlos Martins poses for pictures wearing bionic gloves, at his home in Sao Paulo, Brazil, Wednesday, Jan. 22, 2020.

Associated Press

Costa said. "I approached the maestro at the end of a concert in my city of Sumaré, in the Sao Paulo countryside. He quickly noticed they wouldn't work, but then he invited me to his house to develop the project."

Costa and Martins spent the subsequent months testing several prototypes. The perfect match came in December, and cost only about 500 Brazilian reais (\$125) to build. Now Mar-

tins never takes off his new gloves, even when going to bed.

"I might not recover the speed of the past. I don't know what result I will get. I'm starting over as though I were an 8-year-old learning," he said, joined by his poodle Sebastian. His dog's name, of course, is a tribute to Bach.

The pianist's return was first reported by the Brazilian newspaper Folha de S.Paulo. Reporter Ricardo Kotscho said Martins hurried to the bar near his home before Christmas "like a boy who got a new toy."

Martins said he has received more than 100 gadgets in the last 50 years as miraculous solutions to his hand problems. None worked well or long enough.

"But these gloves do. I can even tune them accordingly," he said, showing how he can rearrange the glove's internal pads to play at a faster or slower tempo. "That doesn't mean it's all sorted. The muscle atrophy plays a role. Sometimes I try to play a speedy one and get depressed because it just doesn't happen yet."

The "extender gloves," as their inventor calls them, gave Martins a goal: Play the piano again at New York's Carnegie Hall in October, when he is scheduled to conduct a concert celebrating the 60th anniversary of his first appearance there.

Martins, meantime, is practicing early in the morning and late at night, to the delight of his neighbors, until he can interpret an entire Bach concert perfectly.

"It could take one, two years. I will keep pushing until that happens," he said. "I won't give up." □



Brazilian pianist Joao Carlos Martins plays the piano wearing bionic gloves at his home in Sao Paulo, Brazil, Wednesday, Jan. 22, 2020.

Associated Press

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